

# MACLEAN'S

**EASTER IN THE HOLY LAND**  
Jonathon Gatehouse meets  
Israel's besieged Christians

**Q&A: COLIN MOCHRIE**  
On comedy—and his  
'apology' to Americans

**SCARED BY SARS**  
Allan R. Gregg dissects  
our culture of fear

## THE FALL OF BAGHDAD: A PERSONAL ACCOUNT BY ALEXANDRE TRUDEAU

'I listen to this war of blood and fire, surrounded by roses'

**Iraq's desperate  
need for law,  
order and aid**  
BY ARTHUR KENT

**A south-of-the-  
border view  
of Canada**  
BY BENOIT AUBIN



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**'Aligning Canada with the U.S. in its invasion of Iraq would have destroyed our credibility in the world as keepers of peace.'** —JULIE KERRY, *its: Columnist, Oct.*

Letters to the Editor [letters@maclean.ca](mailto:letters@maclean.ca)

#### **'Skepticism and humanity'**

Thanks to Jonathan Gershon ("The road back"), Arthur Kent ("War miscalculations"), Alexandre (Buck) Trudeau ("Living in a day-and-night") and to Maclean's for surprising me with your April 7 cover stories. Maybe I've spent too much time down south, but I'd just hope that a national newspaper would even begin to present this level of skepticism and humanity when covering a U.S.-led war. I only hope you would be presenting the same quality of analysis if a majority of Canadians favoured the war on Iraq.

**Tyler Ridge, Vancouver**

Maclean's could be described as "The Baghdad Times." That is a critical narrative history and the tone you are setting is one that vilifies the Americans and glorifies a society that has religious leaders ascending murder and mayhem from loudspeakers. Why don't you devote more articles to the Saddam Hussein regime's many documented crimes and atrocities?

**Tom Ross, Burnsville, Ont.**

Arthur Kent would like time jumping on the "Warrior blow" bandwagon. He writes, "The shortcomings of U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's strategy are many and varied, but most boil down to simply getting the math wrong." (I suppose Kent has a point. The "war" portion of this month's undertaking lasted a whole three weeks, instead of a more acceptable one or two. Some shame on you!)  
**John Sessa, Kelowna, Que.**

Ever since the Marines entered Baghdad I've been depressed thinking that soon I'll be missing my daily chills from the Iraq information minister's daily TV message. How pleased I was to read Arthur Kent's article in U.S. "War miscalculations." Thanks for the laugh.  
**Bridget Beale, Vancouver**

The effect of the waves from the Iraqis on River that have been washing over the



of the world were obvious on a recent trip home to Ottawa from San Diego, Calif. The heightened security and the ensuing five-hour delay to catch my flight gave me the opportunity to read the excellent reporting of the events in Iraq by Maclean's—in particular, Alexandre (Buck) Trudeau's. When a fellow waiting passenger asked what sort of junk I was reading (we were all getting cranky), I replied by handing him Trudeau's story about life in a besieged city. A couple of minutes later, he handed it back to me with the words, "I did not know about these people. Why wasn't I told?"

**Peter L'Herapier, Ottawa**

Strick as I am, in a country where the concepts of objective reporting and journalistic integrity have all but disappeared in our

#### **CLARIFICATION**

Last week, an editing error crept into Adam Zimmermann's guest column, "Why the PM is right," about a controversial report the U.S. and Britain used to justify war with Iraq. It stated that an intelligence report claimed Iraq was trying to acquire 500 tons of uranium oxide "from Iraq." It should have read, "from Niger." Maclean's regrets the error.

corporate-controlled press, it was an absolute pleasure to stumble onto your Web site and read some truth for a change. What story that, in the United States (a nation that likes to think of itself as the birthplace of the free press), we have so inundated ourselves with propaganda disguised as news that the propagandists are actually starting to believe their own fiction. Nick's firing of Peter Arnett was much more than a simple management-employee disagreement. It was a very public warning to American reporters everywhere that responsible journalism and intelligent discourse will not be tolerated if it is, in any way, critical of our selected president's insane little war on the way to which it's being poured out. God bless you, Canada, for refusing to participate. I only wish I had the financial means to emigrate.

**Greg Tynes, Baltimore City, Okla.**

#### **American view**

Interesting article by expatriate J. D. Coisidias ("An American in Canada," The Back Page, April 7). However, I am afraid I don't recognize anything or anyone in it. I, too, am an American, living in Canada since June 2001, and have frequently travelled back to my home in the southern U.S. I have not met any people who believe Iraq had anything to do with 9/11 or many who are fearful of seeming unpatriotic. I don't believe the vast majority of Americans or American politicians have any ill will toward Canada, and I believe that the Americans who have been vocal about Canada's involvement are about the same caliber as the Canadians who are so vocal in their anti-American views. My experience in Canada has been much different from Coisidias's in that people automatically assume that, because I am American, I am a warmonger. For the most part, American citizens are just people living their lives, and George W. Bush is no more a realistic representation of an average American than Jean Chrétien is of an average Canadian.  
**Leslie Plick, Windsor, Ont.**

J. D. Coisidias has offered us a perspective that, as Canadians, were hoping was not there: that we are not as thanked by the population of the United States as the Art Flenderson or Paul Gohierre would have us think. Canada's role has yet to be played within this conflict. Trust our constant will



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get through this. *Shilings* will get into scrape occasionally but will always be family.  
**Perry Wilcock, Calgary**

Taken on the flip side, being a Canadian is an increasingly perilous American story. I am not aware, however, of any Americans who actively support the war. There are many who support the men and women in the armed forces, and rightfully so, but this should not be conflated with supporting the Iraq invasion. Cornsblaw was correct in his portrayal of the type of information that is reported and the manner in which it is portrayed. The news has at little more than a thinly veiled attempt at pacifying the masses. What is more disturbing, however, is that the people are beginning to realize that they are being manipulated, yet no one appears to care. It is frightening that in this land of Freedom, people are afraid to speak up or that they appear anti-American.  
**Walterne Simoes, Boston**

I can see why. [D. Cornsblaw is in Toronto. Actually an even better place for him would be Quebec. He doesn't represent Americans, but like the millions who miss 80-year-old hockey players at Montreal don't represent Canadian. Real Canadian, like real Americans, believe in freedom and standing up for it.  
**Terry James, Ontario, Ont.**

You are a good man, [D. Welcome to our country! I hope you stay and prosper.  
**Kelli Wakefield, Orem, Ind.**

#### At war with SARS

Margo Halupka in her encounter with severe acute respiratory syndrome ("I'm not going up, says a name on the floor line," *Health*, April 7) is facing many of the same challenges and emotions that the entire town of Williams faced when the E. coli water crisis disrupted thousands of lives. I recognize the feelings of lawlessness, the uncertainty about your own health and that of your co-workers, the fear of transmitting illness to your family. In the early days, we, too, faced many questions that could not be answered. We were unsure whether we should be at work. Throughout our crisis, hundreds of volunteers and health workers worked endless hours and days to provide some comfort and information to the residents—healthy and ill. These people, from



Halupka and others fought the war on SARS

here and away, were the true heroes of the crisis. Congratulations to Margo Halupka and hundreds of others who won't quit in the face of another medical crisis.  
**Beverly Wilcock, Vancouver, Ont.**

In the midst of the uproar surrounding the SARS outbreak, I am forced to ask why the enormous effort being exerted by government to deal with this still rare and usually benign disease is not duplicated in the way we deal with some of the real scourges of our society. I sympathize with the families who have lost loved ones to smoking-related diseases and to car crashes?  
**Gerald M. Macdonald, St. George's Park, Ont.**

#### Our home and ...

In his letter ("Family reading," *The Mail*, April 7), Peter Stuenkel expresses surprise that Gov. Gen. Adrienne Clarkson has done nothing about changing the words "native land" in the national anthem so it would apply to herself, to him and to all immigrants and Canadians born outside the country. Peter Stuenkel considered that maybe Her Excellency looks like thousands of other Canadians, that there is no reason to change the lyrics solely to be politically correct? The music to O Canada was written in 1880 and the English lyrics currently included in the anthem were written in 1908 (though amended slightly in 1980), long before the term politically correct was even considered.  
**Art Wells, Kingston, Ont.**

It was interesting to read the letters about your March 24 cover story on the Governor

General. It is sad there was no response from those, whether Muslim, Christian or other faith, who uphold the values of the family. The Governor General and her now-husband living for many years without the benefit of marriage was just plain wrong.  
**J. R. Bradstreet, Calgary**

#### In a fashion

Bravo to Madsen for financing interesting and insightful commentary about the fashion industry ("Canadian cool," *Business*, April 7). The nature of the fashion business and the current state of the industry are certainly newsworthy and I applaud Suzanne Boyd's discussion of the Canadian fashion identity. While inspired by the rich influences of Canadian culture, Canadian geography and our favourite Canadian customs, designers like myself are often trapped by the struggle to keep our business afloat in such a tough market. The result is too often a compromise of identity. With the encouragement and support of the media and organizations such as the Fashion Design Council of Canada, I am confident that a market shift will give designers more freedom to establish an identity that is uniquely Canadian.  
**Sara Raboin-Randall, Toronto**

I am not really an authority on fashion, but I am sick of Europeans and Americans telling us how much better than us they are. I wonder if the writer of "Canadian Cool" has actually seen what most Europeans and Americans wear.  
**Gemma Blyth, London, Ont.**

#### The French example

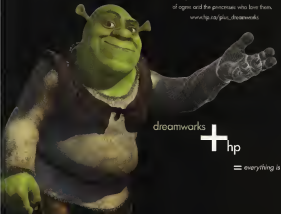
For all her hand-wringing in "Of course they're angry" (*Column*, April 7), Mary Jurgens misses the point: it is Canadians who should feel "dislike and fury" toward the Bush administration over its brutal and barbaric conduct in Iraq, not the other way round. Does she really expect us to believe that "the Americans would have been much happier if Clinton had taken a principled stance from the very beginning and stuck to it rather than dithering"? Excuse me, but isn't that what France did? The bottom line is, the only countries to find favour with the Bush administration these days are those that ponder their inevitable appeal for global domination.  
**Priscilla Calhoun, Monroe New York**



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## REFINING THE VISION

Not everyone would have the daring to renovate a national institution. But that didn't stop Anthony Wilson-Smith from undertaking the challenge of revamping Maclean's shortly after he became editor in March 2000.

Wilson-Smith cites the magazine's renovation as the most significant challenge he's faced during his tenure. "We wanted to build on our many strengths, reorienting and redirecting the magazine without breaking with the past."

In the process, he says, Maclean's evolved from being a publication that focused primarily on the previous week's news to one that reflects the issues and ideas people are currently discussing.

To that end, the magazine introduced fresh new voices in features like *Over to You*, *Takeover*, weekly essays, Q&As and *The Back Page*. It also added Cartoon Editor Terry Mosher, better known as Aitlin, whose mandate is to introduce readers to an exciting new generation of Canadian cartoonists.

"These moves are designed to produce a high level of opinionated debate," explains Wilson-Smith. "There are times when journalists should get out of the way and let that debate take place."

Through these changes, Wilson-Smith has enjoyed the encouragement of a highly respected link with the magazine's past. Former editor Peter C. Newman, who has been associated with Maclean's for almost 50 years, has been unfailingly supportive of the process, he says.

"We recognized that our history was one of change and continued to encourage it, even when others said it could be dangerous."

In many ways, says Wilson-Smith, the next step in Maclean's evolution will be the most challenging. "We've established a framework for change and the broad strokes are in place. Now our focus is on execution, refining our vision while we continue to encourage new voices and fresh perspectives."

For further information contact: [behindthescenes@macleans.ca](mailto:behindthescenes@macleans.ca)

## Anglobalization?

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## Health | Is China doing enough in the global fight against SARS?

International health authorities had a pretty good idea that neurotically secretive China wasn't telling the full truth about the extent of its SARS outbreak. But when Dr. Jing Yanyang, a retired military physician, daringly broke party ranks with his own count of the dead and suffering, it was a vision heard around the world. Malaysia issued travel restrictions on flights from China and other SARS-infected countries. Other physicians issued quarantine orders on affected businesses and certain air travelers.

Jiang Jinhuairen—he used the military hospital alias in Beijing—had at least 300 SARS patients and saw no reason why officials were reporting a handful for the entire city—raised yet more troubling questions for the World Health Organization and its ability to track the disease, a potentially deadly variant of a virus that can cause the common cold. A WHO team applauded limited measures

in Guangdong province, where the outbreak began, but noted Beijing and rural China still have much to do.

Here at home, a mass week of disinfecting messaged. Health Canada deferred blame from people who had traveled to affected regions (though there is no evidence SARS can be transmitted by blood). Prime Minister Jean Chrétien ate a very public lunch at a Chinese restaurant in Toronto to assure Canadians that the community was not to be blamed. Officials in hand-hit Ontario said the information seemed to be slowing, though they cautioned it was too early to claim victory. Meanwhile, concern grew in the U.S., particularly Florida, giving SARS, the WHO said crudely, “global epidemic potential.” There were about 3,000 probable cases reported worldwide as of last week, and 114 deaths.

DANIEL HANAUER/USA

International school children sporting masks in the Chinese quarter of Jakarta.

## ScoreCard

**ALAN CHILCOTE** Starts four decades since election as MP by explaining Canada's “principled” stand on U.S.-led war: didn't back it but hoped for victory, doesn't support regime change but glad Saddam's gone. Clearly if necessary, but after 18 years, who start now?

**TRADITIONAL** As Baghdad crumbled, Saddam wanted to be taken away by U.S. troops from their city. Saddam was sending a ship. Whatever Saddam's strategy was to force face-selling, vaccination centers in North Korea—or at least for Big Tobacco.

**YUSUKE** Canadian Olympic company sued by Supreme Court. Harvillan for not paying her \$550,000 fee for a day's photo shoot. Clearly, reason for non-payment on a four racing bid, but non-suit of another sort: it didn't like her short new hairdo.

**CHINESE OFFICIALS** Add SARS to list of China's experts. President for security against global spread of disease. Experts: better to World Health Organization, but not before big public campaign in isolation.

**YUSUKE** More Protesters in anti-gay cities. SARS for slowing off scheduled visit to Toronto to flag debate about. Unrepresentative city full of arrests. Harvillan's company sure to demand poor deal of marriage to defunct Japanese.



**ANOTHER WAR** war-torn working tribesmen involved up to 300 people and injured over 600 others in what could be the worst atrocity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's 47-year civil war. According to witnesses, the sound of a vehicle set off the hours-long killing spree in 15 villages in the province of Ituri. An international aid group said 3.3 million have died during the conflict, most from malnutrition and disease.

## WORLD

**MIDDLE EAST** With the world watching, Baghdad, Israel's air force, using F-16 fighter jets and Apache helicopters, launched missile strikes on crowded Gaza City, killing seven and wounding 47 others, including women and children. Israel was targeting a senior Hamas leader and his followers, who were killed in the attack.

The next day, a bomb blast in a Palestinian school in the West Bank village of al-Jarha injured 19 children. A right-wing Jewish group calling itself Bnei Avraham claimed responsibility, but authorities were also investigating whether a student had brought in an old grenade to show off.

**TV ORATS** A 39-year-old army major, his wife (a pediatric nurse), and a college lecturer were convicted of cheating their way to the top in the British quiz show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* They had used the lecturer's coded coughs from the audience to select the right answer. The three were handed suspended sentences and ordered

to pay civil fines. Their \$3 million prize cheque was also cancelled.

**THE GODFATHER** Corrupted mobster Vincent Gigante, who used to wander the streets of New York in his bathrobe, played a key role in obstructing justice by feigning a mental illness.

The reputed head of the Genovese crime family, Gigante—known as Chin or the Old Father—is halfway through a 15-year sentence for racketeering.

**TRAVEL** British Airways and Air France plan to retire their 13-giant feet of blue road Concorde later this year, ending 27 years of transatlantic supersonic jet-setting.

Within days of posting massive red-wooden and a \$45.5 million year-end loss, Montreal's Bombardier Inc. announced a \$79-billion rail contract to refurbish the London Tube, a \$1-billion upgrade on a contract unveiled last fall.

**AMERICAN JUSTICE** The U.S. Supreme Court upheld state bans on cross-burning by the Ku Klux Klan, but only when it is being used as a specific instrument of intimidation and terror. The ruling leaves open the possibility that crosses can be burned in rallies as a form of political expression.

The U.S. justice population topped the two million mark last year. That means in every 142 U.S. residents was in jail in mid-2002, when the tally was 140.

**FOLLOW UPS** Cuba sentenced at least 36 of 78 recently arrested dissidents to 12 to 27 years in prison. Kuba executed three men who tried to hijack a ferry to Florida two weeks ago. The crackdown was condemned by Canada and other countries.

In a surprisingly quick decision, Britain's appeals court gave the go-ahead to a Leeds couple who want doctors to help them select the genetic makeup of their new child. The Ebberharts are hoping tissue from that child's discarded umbilical cord can be used to cure their four-year-old son, Zair, who suffers from a rare blood disorder.

**Quote of the week** “I can speak what is in my heart. The Baath Party agents have fled, the spies are gone, there is no one left to stop me saying whatever I believe.”

**FIRED** SIR ELIAS, 65, a Kurd in northern Iraq



**PRINCE OF THE CHURCH** Some 1,200 mourners, among them a who's who of Canada's political and business elite, bade a farewell to Gerald Emmett Cardinal Bernardin, a typewriter's son from Montreal who rose through the ranks to be named a pope, caused first murmurs at times of sexual abuse, and established for all time the education rights of Ontario Catholics. A priest for 64 years, archbishop of Toronto for 11, he was 90 when he died.

## CANADA

**DEPORTATION** The federal Immigration board wants to deport two young men convicted in the drug-murder deaths of Vancouver politician Brian Thorpe three years ago. Behalfers Singh Khaira, 23, and Sukhvir Singh Khaira,

28, were recently given two-year conditional sentences so they could continue to work and go to school. The deportation order was requested by the family of the victim, which was outraged at the sentences and the fact that the two continued the initial charges against them. It comes at a time when fed-

eral Auditor General Sheila Fraser reported that Citizenship lost track of 36,000 people it had previously ordered deported.

**GREAT LAKES** Arctic lakes are the warmest they've been in 5,000 years, geologists reported. And a group of Canadian and U.S. scientists predicted that, with current global-warming trends, water levels in the Great Lakes will drop in coming decades, some by as much as three metres.

**POUTICS** Finance Minister John Manley finally crossed his bar into the Liberal leadership race. Robert Ghis, the 29-year-old son of former P.E.I. premier Joe Ghis, won the Gert leadership in that province. Jean Chretien created a new junior Cabinet position for Ontario MP Steve Mahoney, with a focus on affordable housing.

The *Canadian Press*, on patrol in the Persian Gulf as part of the war against international terrorism, was instructed by Ottawa not to mention fleeing Iraqi mercenaries to the U.S. military if inadvertently captured.

**NUMBERS** The Canadian dollar hit a three-year high of US68.79 cents, a likely sign of impending interest-rate hikes in Canada and a weakening in the U.S. economy.

Alberta reaffirmed itself as the most envied provincial economy with its 10th straight budgetary surplus (\$1.1 billion) alongside a spending increase of nearly five per cent.

**MEDIA** The *Toronto Star* won the coveted *Michener Award* for public service journalism, for a much-debated series that accused Toronto police of racial profiling and used the force's own statistics. The series provoked a lawsuit by the police union, alleging the newspaper was granting officers as much.

**HEALTH** Post-menopausal women who regularly use the popular hormone therapy, the active ingredients in *Libell* and *Modura*, may cut the risk of breast cancer by nearly 50 per cent, U.S. scientists said. Regular dosages of ASA also help, but not to the same extent.

Researchers at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children conducted their 15-year effort to map "Canada's chromosomes," a unique marker that helps understand the genetic root of such diseases as cystic fibrosis, leukemia and autism.

BY ASLW



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# THE FALL OF BAGHDAD

Saddam Hussein is no longer a threat. But with the dictator gone comes a new set of challenges—restoring order and rebuilding Iraq from the ruins.

## Cover

**THE AIR'S STILL THICK** with the stench of war and there's no ease let on when the hostilities might finally end. But the two most telling blows in Iraq were landed last week. The first was delivered by four bunker-busting bombs that demolished Saddam Hussein's last known refuge in besieged Baghdad. It wasn't clear if the attack killed the Iraqi dictator and his sons or merely chased them into a desperate hiding place, but it did seem to trigger the collapse of authority in the capital as regime leaders vanished. Except for pockets of resistance, the city fell without the endlessly bloody, street-to-street battle that some had feared.

Iraq, though, provided the most compelling evidence of victory. Convinced by the presence of U.S. troops and the disappearance of regime loyalists that Saddam was no longer a threat, Baghdad residents toppled statues and set fire to images of the hated dictator. They ransacked top officials' homes and government offices—one man, gunning bravely, walked out of Uday Hussein's vacated compound with a white horse. Some even cheered the arrival of coalition forces, just as U.S. President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair had predicted before the fighting began.

But now, as the war wraps up, it gets complicated. The symbolism of Iraq's seeming down-throwing of Saddam was powerful, but so were the stark legacies of widespread looting—over 60 hospitals—and news of far-right bombings. Worse, Iraq's suppressed religious divisions began to erupt. At a mosque in Najaf, Shi'ite cleric Abdul Majid al-Khoei—whom Blair described as "a religious leader who embodied hope and reconciliation"—was hacked to death by a mob loyal to another militia. In the chaos, the coalition must re-stave order, provide water and power, re-pave roads and bridges, avert so thousands of casualties, and kick-start the economic engine, the oil industry. The reconstruction team, led by retired U.S. general Jay Garner, won't always be greeted by cheers. Too many Iraqis blame coalition misdeeds and blame for leaving their country in ruins.

And tough questions remained unanswered. Where were the weapons of mass destruction that were Iraq's justification for war? Would Washington and the United Nations patch up their differences? Could the Iraqis agree on a leader? And amidst the new dawn, will the war really be over?

MARK DUNN



# WAR AND ROSES

When U.S. forces arrived in the Iraqi capital, ALEXANDRE TRUDEAU was already there. elusive account

**ROSES ARE IN BLOOM** in Baghdad. In a little-walled garden, I sit and rock in an old two-seater swing. From here, the war is an audio-visual experience: a missile hits another palace, bombers circle overhead, and Iraqi respond with anti-aircraft guns. American tanks advance into the western part of the city, where they are met with a barrage of small arms fire at a highway junction. An Apache helicopter opens up on Iraqi positions, the prayer becoming the fearful it called again. And sometimes the war is of scenery: the sweet, sulphurous smell of spent gunpowder, or the acromatic smoke of fragrant shrubs set on fire during combat, or the stench of burning petrol.

With the power cut, Baghdad is as black as oil at night. The sky is filled with stars as I listen to this war of blood and fire, war rounded by roses.

**ON APRIL 1**, with the ground war raging closer to Baghdad, a frenzied confusion descends upon the angry towers of Iraqi intelligence agencies whose job it is to keep close watch over foreigners in the city. Their nose has been tightening, and most our visitors have been corralled in the neo-classic Husayn Palace. I arrived in Iraq in early March to make a film about the war, and I know it is only a matter of time before I am found and rounded up. Of my own small hotel, I have to make my break. So I find refuge with my friend Omar and his family at his home in the southwest of the city. I am completely and precariously unnoticed, but in the company of warm, wonderful people. "You know there is a risk with me staying with you," I tell Omar. "No risk," he resolutely answers.

A few days later, the next chapter of the war, the part we've all been waiting for and dreading, begins. First, news breaks that American troops have seized the airport. And Baghdad is thrown into a dither as when the power is permanently restored. Iraqis claim the airport will be occupied immediately with "surprise" methods.

In addition to soldiers dug in everywhere, Baghdad witnesses a new sight: the sinister movements of the Fedayeen Saddam troops. They are a guerrilla unit created by Saddam Hussein's son Uday and are reputed to be the most fanatical fighters. They are dressed all in black, sometimes masked. They operate with so-called technical light and fire pickup trucks with heavy machine

guns mounted in the back. They speed toward the airport.

After this, a relatively calm day passes, but it ends with an official Iraqi announcement that the airport is surrounded and only five Americans remain alive. The Iraqi anti-aircraft gunners lower their cannons from the sky and begin pounding the airport. This comes on through the night. The next morning, the first racket of machine-gun fire is heard in Baghdad proper. I'm driven to see what spectacle is awaiting my car. I creep out of the house, and through the empty streets toward the airport highway.

I reach a pedestrian overpass, under cover of which I take position to begin filming. The battle has cut off sight, a few kilometers to the south, but it is coming my way. A couple of nervous soldiers who have seen me cross onto the road. They beckon me, anxiously and angrily. It is a moment of sheer panic: there's no way for me to explain my self—though I will be a spy. But the soldiers are 100m away. I slowly back toward a small side street and, once out of sight, look like a madman and speed back to Omar's house. I vault over the front gate and hide. Luckily, all the while, the battle draws nearer, otherwise occupying the soldiers.

The fighting passes by the neighborhood like a tempest. Omar and I drive out to see what has happened. Shooting continues, but it is the ordinary gunfire of Iraqis firing into the air. Apparently (and at great cost), they have won this fight. American tanks made an incursion into the north of the city in an effort to reach the airport or to take position on the access road to the airport. But they were overwhelmed by hundreds of Iraqi foot soldiers, some armed with rocket-propelled grenades. A grenade hitting a state of the art American tank won't do much damage. The repeated hit will eventually destroy it, which on this occasion is what the Iraqis managed to do. The Americans probably decided to pull back under cover of their Apache helicopters, whose devastating firepower left the scene littered with destroyed Iraqi vehicles. So ended the first American attack on Baghdad.

As Omar and I survey the mess, his only comment is to point to the smoking wrecks. "You see those American vehicles and those Iraqi ones?" he says. "Strong men paid for

The writer on the streets of Baghdad, where his presence is precariously unofficial



The U.S. presence in the heart of Baghdad. Iraqi soldiers celebrate a temporary victory tonight

ous with their lives. For what? For Bush? For Saddam? For oil? For power? Crazy!" As I film the unloading of an American tank from our car, a pickup truck swerves to stop in front of us and an Iraqi secret-police agent jumps angrily out. Omar leaps into action, rubbing out enthusiastically to greet him. "Wow! Look at that," he gushes. "We got an American tank! Amazing! Can you believe it? And that destroyed artillery gun, is that American too?" We are winning the war!

His play works. The agent begins to coo and answer his questions. Only as an afterthought, he points to me and asks, "But who is that?" Omar replies, "Oh him—he is a Canadian journalist! But don't worry, he has all his papers." Now in a good mood, the officer asks, "Do you want?" To which Omar

grins, "Of course." The agent then turns to me and produces an Arabic "You see how we squash Bush like an ant when he tries to invade our city?"

**BUT U.S. FORCES** learned a lesson on the way to Baghdad. Iraqi resistance, although disorganized and limited to relatively small units, was potentially fierce. So, when fighting their way up from the south, the Americans decided that an exhaustive advance toward the capital, completely overwhelming all resistance along the way, would be slow and costly. With their fast and powerful armored divisions, they blitzkrieged their way straight to Baghdad, but many did not yet win, calculating that if they brought the fight to the capital and decisively took it, other places would rarely fall.

Now, after the first skirmish, they apply the same lesson to Baghdad. Realizing it would be pointless to try and advance slowly through the city, they speed to its heart, rushing their tanks straight to Saddam's palaces. The effect is demoralizing and devastating for Iraqis. One day, a mix of fear and loyalty, they fight better (if at all) if they know Saddam is standing strong behind them. They fight when Saddam's bodyguard is wounded. With the Americans in Saddam's palaces, in the center of Baghdad, they began to break.

**DURING A MOMENTARY lull** in the fighting, Omar goes out for bread. He comes back with an interesting tale. "I was driving along, the streets deserted," he recounts. "A lone Fedayeen soldier waves to me, ask-

ing for a ride. He is quite young. He wants me to take him to the bus station. He is a man. 'Look at my hands,' he laments—they are shaking. 'They crossed the gates of the north,' he says. 'So sorry! We will fight these soldiers, we will fight these tanks. But we are defenseless against their Apaches. It is lost. I'm going home.'"

The young soldier was almost in tears, Omar tells me, concerning his story. "I ask him, 'Do you need money?' 'No,' he replies. 'Just take me to the station.' But could I have a cigarette, maybe?" Omar says he gave the soldier a whole pack, but adds that as they approached the bus station, he heard someone yelling his name. It was Farouk, Omar's old friend and a soldier of Saddam's Bush party. "Farouk is now wearing his uniform and doesn't have his gun," says Omar. "Drop off

**"Young men paid for this with their lives," Omar says. "For what? For Bush? For Saddam? For oil and power? Crazy!"**

the Fedayeen and pick him up. Farouk tells me I shouldn't have picked the soldier up because he is a deserter. So I ask Farouk, why is he running around like this? He answers, laughing, "I'm a deserter. I came to my post, but it was locked up and no one was there. So I am going home—to hell with this!"

Lanes, Omar's family and I sit around the kitchen table, gunfire crackling outside. "I don't know how the Americans are going to make this work," Omar's mother says. "Even

if they win, they will never be safe in Iraq." Miriam, Omar's wife, adds, "This is not the end, but the beginning. The real war starts after the war. The Fedayeen will earn their wage. And it won't stop until the Americans leave Iraq."

Omar's father then offers the American some advice. "I hope at least that they will have the wisdom to let the Iraqi rule Iraq," Omar agrees. "We will not be governed by outsiders," he says, "not even Iraqis who haven't lived with us through the last 25 years of troubles. This is who we are now." On the radio, in the background, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld shouts: "Now the Iraqi people are beginning to imagine life without Saddam." Omar smiles and sighs. "I hate to agree," he says. "But I do. And I am."





## CHAOS IN WAR'S WAKE

Iraq desperately needs law, order and aid, writes **ARTHUR KENT** in Kuwait

**INVAADING ARMIES** led the way, followed closely by the spectral forces of political long-makings, seeking to install the Bush administration's favorite Iraqi sect as the forefront of the country's first post-Saddam Hussein governing body. But the failure of American and British authorities to prepare for keeping order, say diplomats and aid specialists, has seriously compromised what all parties view as the ultimate goal in vanquishing the old regime: the creation of a stable, humane and sustainable society in Iraq.

Having swept the country with an unstoppable war machine, the coalition appears to have overlooked the need to field even the most basic force of military policing specialists. In fact, for example, British forces deployed personnel and not in taking

the city, but they are, almost to a man, combat soldiers. They lack the experience and training required to cope with a volatile situation in which residents are preyed upon by looters and are desperate for clean water and food. Worse, the British marines who know Basra best are due to see home by the end of the month, with no clear indication of what kind of force will replace them.

The Americans, meanwhile, mainly have more fighting forces in the pipeline: the 4th Infantry Division and the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment have begun rolling into Iraq, with the 1st Cavalry Division on the way from Texas. As yet, though, there are no plans to field civilian or military police units, the official view is that chaos and plundering are predictable in the wake of military

action, and things will eventually settle down. Others aren't so sure. "There was a lot of talk about breaking the grip of the Iraqi regime," one diplomatic observer in Kuwait told *Maclean's*, "but the administration hasn't really got a handle on what to do next. It's a makeless ship—the focus was all about removing Saddam Hussein, all about military thrust. The complete lack of a plan for civil control proves that very little thought was given to the law-and-order issues that would surely follow due war. And what's especially galling, of course, is that American officials talk endlessly about providing a bright new future for Iraqis."

Relief groups share these sentiments. Ships full of food and language in Kuwait's harbors, waiting for secure conditions to allow



In the south, they were desperate for clean water (left); in Baghdad, the looters carried away anything that wasn't solidly nailed down

delivery to rickety Iraqi communities. This past week, aid organizations became increasingly impatient with U.S. and British authorities, who've shown their profusion of for posting war resources across the border but have so far failed to follow up with meaningful shipments of humanitarian supplies. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees appealed to "the occupying forces" to "insure and maintain law and order" in Iraq. Attempting to counter that, Attorney General in Thursday showed journalists in Qatar several video clips, recorded by U.S. military camera teams, of soldiers delivering water and medical aid. But the projects were on a small scale, and with witnesses of the briefing, the UN spokesman for humanitarian affairs, David Wornat, responded on BBC World television with a verbal barrage. The UNHCR, he said, had raised the issue of security with American officials in Kuwait, and "we'll want to know what they're going to do to address this problem in the streets."

Meanwhile, agencies as diverse as the Inter-

national Committee of the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières complain that it's impossible to deliver relief to a community without power, water and security for their workers. It's at least one explanation in Kuwait City, if a fiction between aid specialists and U.S. military authorities erupted into a bitter shouting match, with the head of one non-governmental organization accusing U.S. forces of being too slow to restore the movement of aid workers between towns and cities, and too lax in enforcing public order. Aided by American and British officials are sensitive to these charges, a member of the foreign diplomatic corps smiled knowingly. "Certainly there's growing suspicion that the border [between Kuwait and Iraq] is being tightly controlled," the source said, "because they don't want a lot of independent journalists roaming around, reporting on security problems in the south."

The day after Baghdad fell, the U.S. military announced that assessments would soon be made of the most urgent needs of Iraqis. But while the Pentagon played critic

up on this front, its efforts to designate a new governing authority for Iraq appeared, if anything, to have jumped the gun on popular opinion both inside the country and among Iraqi abroad. The U.S. military aide Ahmed Chalabi, leader of the now-Saddam Iraqi National Congress, along with hundreds of his U.S.-trained allies, into southern Iraq, even while combat still raged around the capital.

Chalabi and spokesmen for the Bush administration insisted that they appeared to be positioning that not constitute any marked U.S. preference for the formerly exiled opposition leader. But those details ring hollow, not least because of the increasingly public fighting within Washington itself over Chalabi's suitability to govern. The State Department views Chalabi as damaged goods: he'd been in exile for 40 years prior to last week, and he's been dogged by accusations of financial impropriety and unbridled ambition. Yet Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld wants Chalabi to feature prominently in the Iraq interim authority now



being assembled under the supervision of Jay Garner, a retired U.S. general.

The Chalabi issue is one on which the U.S. and Britain disagree, though not to the same extent as on the debate over exactly when and how the United Nations should be brought into the process of forming the new Iraqi government. That could change, however, if the hawkish in the Bush administration go too far in promoting their man. "If we could secure greater UN involvement in the near future," says a source in Britain's foreign office, "the Chalabi question might balance itself out, because other voters would be based and presumably conservative would follow. But if the UN's role continues to be deferred, pushing too hard with Chalabi will set the winning bells ringing. The perception will be that appointing him will be to the disadvantage of other Iraqi figures who deserve a role in the interim authority."

Arab leaders, even moderates like Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, denounce the idea of U.S. and British stewardship over the interim Iraqi governing body. In fact, most Arab states will likely refuse to recognize an Iraqi government that doesn't truly reflect consensus among all Iraqis. Moreover, Mubarak's Jewish foreign minister, Shimon Peres, once again, recognizes an occupying power. The Iraq people should rule themselves. "Newspapers, like Canada's *Maclean's* and *Al-Ahram*, were more blunt: 'The war will not be the final word. Even if the attacking forces win, they will lose politically.' Some of that disposition may be eased this week when various southern Iraqi opposition leaders gather for the first of several U.S.-sponsored meetings to discuss the composition of a new government."

The squabbling continues sharply with the way an interim government is to be devised for Afghanistan after the U.S.-led rout of the Taliban. In that case, Washington's champs among officials in Kabul can't win widespread approval among both Afghans and the world at large, largely because the architecture of the government he now heads was designed under UN auspices. The Afghan war resumed with grim irony this week. Only hours before American armour rumbled into central Baghdad, 11 Afghan civilians—seven women and four men—lost their lives when U.S. warplanes, hunting Taliban gunmen, dropped a bomb off target.

At the Pentagon, there was an apology for the tragic blunder, but there was no

## HELPING OTHERS RIGHT TO THE END

That Veitche Arslanian tried to help people doesn't surprise those who knew him. The Armenian-born Canadian, 46, was caught in the crossfire in Baghdad last week while trying to ferry civilians to safety. Friends say he was the type of person whose desire to aid those in need in the world's trouble spots outweighed concerns for his own safety. "He always put him-



Civilians in Baghdad counted on Arslanian.

self last," says Paul Nakoum, a Canadian Forces sergeant in Kingston, Ont., who remembers the fiery man as someone who was quick to laugh. "He was like a youthful Santa Claus." A former Forces captain, later a municipal councillor in Dorchester, N.B., Arslanian began volunteering with the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1990. He joined the organization full-time in 2000, working in the former Soviet republic of Georgia before heading to Iraq the next year ahead of logistics. When the war began, Arslanian, who was single, declined to leave Baghdad, knowing its inhabitants relied on the Red Cross for food, water and medicine. He was one of 12 killed in an exchange between U.S. and Iraqi forces despite driving a clearly marked Red Cross vehicle. He was shot in the heart—where he was perhaps most vulnerable. MICHAEL SNEDECOR

version of how widespread this kind of violence remains in Afghanistan a week later, one of Karzai's closest friends was assassinated near Kandahar, and late last month the Taliban murdered a captured aid worker. "No one wants to run on the parade," urges one former U.S. intelligence specialist. "Baghdad's the victory of the moment, so the administration doesn't want old business from Afghanistan getting in the way, even though the signs say that terrorism will be making a big comeback, some of it from Afghanistan. But like the man says, nothing succeeds like success, and nothing helps cover up mistakes like a flag waving victory over a bad guy like Saddam."

Aware of the dangers of excessive triumphalism, both Bush and British's Tony



Opposition leader Chalabi has U.S. support, but that could work against him in Iraq.

Blair took pains to scale hyperbole over their armies' conquest of Iraq, however badly both men used the victory to shore up their political fortunes at home. But they and their advisers misread the results of the Iraq war will be even trickier to manage than those in Afghanistan. Iraq has a higher profile in a much more volatile and widely reported part of the world. The violent aftermath of the campaign, promises not only to be on a larger scale, but more deeply embedded, too, as evidenced by the enormous media attention paid last week to a suicide attack on U.S. troops in Baghdad and the assassination, in Abu Naitryah, of the Shia leader, Abdul Majid al-Shaabi, who had returned from exile to help rebuild his country.

For the Bush administration and the British government, a long hot summer lies ahead. It'll be lonely and expensive, too, because until they allow the UN an appropriate role in Iraq, neither the World Bank nor the International Monetary Fund can help fund reconstruction. Still, for Bush and Blair, dealing with that challenge is a holiday compared to the mission confronting their soldiers. To the grunts and the squad leaders, the task of trying to battle up the rampaging forces of chaos and destruction. They can be forgiven for wondering if their political masters will heed the chorus of advice from around the world: it's time to start rubbing the lungs of power and international co-operation, and rubbing them hard.



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# 'MORE HURT THAN ANGRY'

In Vermont, many understand—even accept—Canada's anti-war stance, reports **BENOIT AUBIN**

**SO, HAS IT** even dawned on that Canada refuses to join the U.S. in the war in Iraq and U.S. ambassador Paul Cellucci utters thinly veiled threats of reprisals, Montreal fans boo the Star-Spangled Banner at a hockey game. Canadian students go home on U.S. highways, a handful of powers from the Boston area get snafled in an anti-war rally in Montreal. Canadian journalists are made to stand their heads for nearly two hours at a border crossing into the U.S.? The short answer is no, not for as most people in Vermont are concerned. But with some U.S. intrusions too officials, well, maybe.

Massachusetts Photographer Peter Lang and I went to Vermont to assess the changing atmospheres of Canadian-American relations. We got off to a bad start: U.S. officials took my passport, and we were imprisoned to wait in an immigration office at the border crossing near Plattsburgh. Que. The scene had a weird Third World feel to it, as a half-dozen gun-packing, black-shirted officials barked themselves with paper work, anxiously avoiding eye contact with us. No explanation was given for why we were delayed for almost two hours. No spelled-out crimes. "Is this a new policy of tighter scrutiny of Canadian travellers?" we asked an officer. "Nah! It must be one of those random things," he said offhandedly.

As time, it was the only difficult moment of this whole trip, in which we tapped around in our flannel Quebec plains and, in the case of this reporter, an impossible-to-cancel French accent. We headed to Burlington—where we heard not a peep of racist remarks, scorn or God forbid, jealousy, while talking to war veterans and peace activists, scholars, even the mother of a U.S. Marine killed in Iraq five days before.

It could be that Burlington is just too

proper, nice and polite to be in-your-face about what it really thinks of us. Or is it colour? This very white, sweetly quaint, fashionable college town is the bourgeois-bohemian capital of the Suburbs. And Montreal is the nearest big city, where Vermont residents go to catch an international flight, a hockey game, an opera, a strip show, or the latest in food or fashion trends.

That, or they just don't give a hoot about us. They are ignorant or so subtly indifferent to Canadian politics, says Susan Reid, a former *Toronto Star* reporter and now an editorial writer with the *Burlington Free Press*. "The only time there has been a discussion of Canada, it was started either by me, or by another Canadian."

"GET OUT of Burlington, come to the real Vermont—come to Rutland!" and Tim Philbin. It's far into the mountains, 100 km south of Burlington. Rutland is to Vermont what Shawinigan is to Quebec: a mid-size industrial town that has known better days. And Philbin—a former tall, fire-breathing, right-wing demagogue—is the host of the morning call-in program on WEEB, Rutland. I wanted to interview him, I ended up fielding calls, live, on the hot line of his small radio.

"You'll get an earful," he promised as he printed his business. "The loading of our national anthem, the harassment of our powers, we remember that," he said on the air. "As we remember how we welcomed our draft dodgers in the Vietnam War." A television showed images of a statue of Saddam Hussein being toppled in Baghdad as Philbin continued: "You third away as we sent our men to fight to liberate Iraq, and now you'd want to make money helping liberate it? Well, I say, screw you, Canada, this is an American show! First



offer—hi, what's your name?"

Great baiting, but nobody really bit. The Jews, Poles, Tuts, Japs and Koreans who called were not as shocked and amused by Canada as the radio jock was. Joe "It is more like a family disagreement, our ties with Canada remain strong." Jake "Many Canadians served in Vietnam and never got recognition from us, besides, they have troops in Afghanistan." Paul "I have a history of going to Canada to get more for 30 years. I think it is the other way around, the Canadians are the ones who react to us for our lifestyle, our money, our money power." Tim "I was offended by our friends strong on their hands, but I am more than just angry



Clockwise from left: Evelyn with a photo of her slain son, Mark; Butler at a school memorial for the former student, Paul Philbin; Alexander

and I will keep going to Montreal." Smie "There is nothing, but it has to do with Iraq. It is a big brother-terrible brother thing. They make cars up there, but they don't have Canada cars."

**PEOPLE OF VERMONT** pride themselves on being politically open and tolerant, but there is more, says Anne Senechal, citing a delicious and not-so-American meal in a Burlington trattoria. Born in Canada, educated in Massachusetts, the bilingual Senechal is the director of the Canadian studies program at the University of Vermont. "We

most of the most Canadian state in the nation, so if you hear Canada-baiting here, it means it has gone really bad everywhere else," he says. "At least one-third of people here have French-Canadian ancestors, if you add those of English-Canadian extraction, you have half the population of the state."

"Tolerance-to-indifference is what defines these parts," says Abbas Alexander, an Iraq-born economist at the university who has publicly opposed U.S. involvement in Iraq. He says that in Burlington he has never been targeted on his ethnic origin or his political position, "though it may have

been different had I lived in other parts of the country. Here, you see, many people, probably a majority, oppose the war, and were somewhat grateful to countries like Canada or even France for saying there are other ways to resolve conflicts than military action."

France? Indeed. A few weeks ago, while Lake Champlain was still frozen, a hundred or so peace activists faced out on the ice to form a peace sign, to be photographed from the air. "Then we all headed on French wine, French bread and French cheese, to make a statement," says Kimberly Eidl, a

project director of the Peace and Justice Center in Burlington.

People opposing war, and those supporting it, have held meetings and rallies, but each on their own; they have never met each other, much less to clash. "There has never been a comprehensive, democratic debate in this country over our foreign policy," Ead says, adding that a good part of the blame rests with the media. "In Canada, in Europe, people get a much more comprehensive, and critical, coverage of the war, but here, it is totally one-sided. People critical of the administration are just not represented at the moment." Starting channels in a hotel room offered some insight into Ead's observation. Five stations were providing live war coverage and, apart from a live offering of golf, basketball or weather, most others had shows that all seemed more violent than real war, revealing armed soldiers engaged in killing things with flowers.

**THE WAR** struck home here when Cpl. Mark Evers, 23, a Marine scout sniper from south Burlington, was killed in combat on April 3. I am his grieving mother, Mandy, in her living room, as she looked through pictures of her only child while bawling her self for the funeral to be conducted with full military honours on April 15. After he finished high school, Mark Evers decided to become a scout before going to college, she says, and he lost his gamble. "When he graduated as a Marine I said, I am a Jewish mother, as I will go and tell President Bush not to go to war for a few years," she recalls. But, even in her grief, Mandy Dean refuses to give her opinion of the conflict. "This is not about politics, this is about Mark. The people who believe in that way he is about. But everybody else is just sorry for me."

A few blocks away, the flag flew at half mast in the South Burlington High School where Mark Evers had been a student. How have the kids felt about this war? "Just like the grown-ups, some are totally opposed, but the other majority is in favour, although with varying degrees of enthusiasm," says Patricia Barrie, the school principal. And what about Canada's position? "We held a forum in which the students could debate. One of them explained that Canada stayed out of Iraq for ignorance philosophical reasons, while other countries, like France, were more opportunistic. His point was very well made."



## THE CHRÉTIEN STYLE OF FENCE-MENDING

Fence mending exercises in politics are often the enemy of clarity. A few weeks ago, Jean Chretien was as clear as he has ever been in opposing war in Iraq without UN approval, and a demand that taking up arms to topple Saddam Hussein was both illegal and against international law. "What's next?" he asked.

But last week, with Iraqis toppling statues of Saddam and U.S. tanks prowling the streets of Baghdad, the government brought a motion forward in the House of Commons. It hoped that "the U.S.-led coalition accomplishes its mission as quickly as possible"—with no acknowledgment that regime change is a stated goal of that mission. In the ensuing debate, the Prime Minister defended Liberal MPs who had criticized the U.S. and George W. Bush, but said, "we should not say things that could give comfort to Saddam Hussein." He insisted his "principled" stand against the unannounced war was correct, and wished for "a quick victory." Then, the government used House rules to ensure that its proposed motion was not put to a vote—converting it to a script help and saving the Canadian Alliance, which had demanded that Canada join

the fight in Iraq. "This is absolute fraud," complained Alliance House Leader John Reynolds. "It is a straight public relations job out of the Prime Minister's Office."

The government's aborted motion came two weeks after Paul Cellucci, the U.S. ambassador to Canada, rebuked Ottawa for abandoning its classical ally, and limited aid economic reprisals. Canadian business leaders have expressed concern that the government's last-war stance was damaging Canada-U.S. relations. Cellucci did subsequently soften his tone, while Chretien downplayed the impact on relations with the country's major trading partner.

But last week, even as the proposed motion was under debate, the PM may have set the stage for another row with the Americans. According to Liberal MPs who attended a dinner with Cellucci in Ottawa, the ambassador was baffled by the fact that the government had ordered the Canadian navy ships in the Persian Gulf not to hand over any escaping Iraqi fighters to U.S. forces. Chretien had earlier acknowledged that one possible diplomatic casualty of the war could be the cancellation of Bush's scheduled May 5 visit to Ottawa. The latest embargo may just give Bush another reason to skip Chretien and visit Rumsfeld.

JULIAN BULLMER

The Prime Minister may have set the stage to be snubbed by the Americans yet again.



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## BEWARE OF THE BEARS

Despite SARS and Iraq, this is a good time to invest in the global economy

IT MAY SEEM to be a good time for bears. The stars—and SARS—seem aligned for grim news.

For apocalyptically inclined bears, the news could hardly become any gloomier. Three of the Four Horsemen (War, Death and Famine) are now rampant, and global weather patterns have been so erratic that Famine could be on the way. When deaths in Toronto from SARS are reported to be in the range of combat deaths of U.S. troops on a bad day in Iraq, it's a bonafide bear (Come to think of it, why trust epidemiological when they're a better running plague?). In the old days, the English gave pandemic-splendid names like Black Death, or for apophysis The French Disease. Now, we get a redoubtably unsketched severe acute respiratory syndrome from the people who give a hideous plague the exceedingly reassuring name of AIDS.)

The outbreak of SARS has apocalyptic resonance for the airline and travel industries. Since 9/11, these major sectors have been reeling. Things get a bit better during the winter, then come the really bad news. You can catch a possibly fatal disease in a plane or a hotel room, that Asian man coughing now you may have come from Guangdong province, where the only figures on the death toll come from a government determined to understate them.

There is never a good time for a new plague, but this one comes as the global economy emerges from recession. This downturn was the punishment inflicted by the crash of technology and telecom stocks. Most economists had been optimistic that this would be the year when U.S. capital spending would kick in and the economy could be gradually taken off its life support of near record-low interest rates—bidding, most conspicuously, zero charges on automobiles. In recent months, even that generosity was losing its luster, and Detroit has been getting desperate about finding other inducements to move cars.

Which brings us to SARS.

To date, the serious impact on the U.S. economy of SARS has been restricted to cancellation of Americans' travel plans to China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, which means more bad news for backbone United Airlines and struggling Northwest. Rumors in China were in New York and San Francisco report steep drops in dollars. To date, no Americans have died of SARS, a combination of good luck and the national fixation on homeland security. The national elaborate plans to identify and combat bioterrorism have meant heightened awareness and rapid response when SARS returns show up. (A Virginia hospital which had treated an infection turned out to be the first U.S. SARS case.)

Canadians don't need to be told that SARS can have an economic impact. Cancellation of a 12,000-attendee concert conversion in Toronto is the first sign that epidemics produce collateral damage. Although one can expect that the disease will shortly be contained in Canada, the bad publicity will doubtless affect exports of U.S.-made airplanes to move visitors from the region whose most profitable politician south of the border is Carolyn Parrish ("Come to think of it, Toronto, where you're safe," doesn't look like a credible sales pitch to Americans these days.)

Canada is the only big industrial nation with a seemingly serious SARS problem at the moment, although that could change swiftly. What scares global economists is the possible stall in the works of the engine of global growth—East Asia. Stephen Roach, of the branch Morgan Stanley economist, revised his already low forecast for

global growth to recession, blaming SARS. (Like most other economists, he thinks the Iraq war will have only temporarily negative effects. That war has gone better than most forecasts assumed, but an aftermath looks problematic. Protecting the oil wells and preventing a resurgence of the war, from an economic standpoint, seem accomplished.)

Mr. Roach somewhat casually refers to SARS as "another nail in the coffin for the world economy." What are his chances of being right? The effects on Hong Kong are severe. Tourism has collapsed, and even residents are avoiding restaurants and bars. The outbreak began on the ninth floor of the Metropole Hotel (and by narrow margins to be in Room 911) and spread through the city. Multinational firms quickly asked travel bans to their employees and then began suggesting that their executives period to Hong Kong send family members back home. It will take a long time for confidence to return, if only because of the porosity of the border with China.

China's economy is certainly less sensitive dependent than Hong Kong's (or Taiwan's). But the regime's foot-dragging response to a new legislative vetoes that the disease that experts believe was born in Guangdong may be better established than government dissent. (A thousand ask Chinese? That's like the odds of winning a lottery. Why worry?)

So what should investors do? A contrarian would argue that a new disease coming at a time of a new low of war and a new low of global economic demand is bound to get overplayed in the media. Morality is low. This isn't the 1918 flu, which, some experts speculate, also originated in China but took time to spread worldwide. This one is a surprise spread, so it developed global reach rapidly. However, that doesn't mean it will kill millions.

Last month, bears warned the Iraq war would be a disaster triggering a US\$50-a-barrel oil. Now, they tell us SARS is the virus which the global economy. Benoit Nathan Rothchild said during the Napoleonic Wars that you cannot win when there's blood in the streets. I am inclined to the view that one might probably update the advice to include SARS in the formula.

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## SARS AND THE FEAR FACTOR

A mysterious disease is just the thing to spark irrational anxieties

NO MATTER how often, and with what force, our public health officials assure us that we should not panic in the face of the SARS outbreak, their message is bound to fall on skeptical ears. That's because the fear has little to do with rationality or reason, and instead appears embedded in deep cultural anxieties that have become a central part of the modern, Western world.

Of older questions I have posed in polling throughout the years, perhaps my favorite is: "If someone told you something was safe and someone else told you it was unsafe, which one would you believe?" A very small minority (10 per cent) reported they would believe that this (unfamiliar) something was safe, and 22 per cent had the common sense to declare that it would depend on who was doing the telling and what they were talking about. But the vast majority—fully 68 per cent—would accept the message of doom and gloom. That gives us a penetrating insight into the nature of fear and our reaction to the possibility of exposure to risk.

Time and time again, we see evidence that our fears are incredibly disproportionate to the actual risk. Other research we have conducted indicates that the public assumes risk in a hierarchical fashion. Situations in which the victim has no control—such as home invasion, a child being kidnapped—involve greater fear than, say, riding a crowded subway or neighborhood, an exposure you can choose to avoid. Things that are evil but are controlled more by us are those that cause the least fear. Finally, any kind of invasion of our personal world, where we have absolutely no control, presents the biggest perceived danger of all. It is not difficult, then, to see why a mysterious respiratory ailment such as SARS, which has killed 19 in Canada, would be at the top of the fear hierarchy. The fact that many more Canadians die each week of cancer (more than 1,200) or in traffic accidents (about 45) has little bearing on our



assessment of the risk of infection.

Ancient fears were largely rooted in superstition and ignorance. But now there is evidence that irrational fears have actually grown as we have become better educated and our superstitions fade as a vestige of an unexamined time. Our faith in the ability of science and reason to answer all questions—and give us the power to control our environment—leaves us vulnerable when it comes apparent that faith is misplaced. A risk for which there is no scientific explanation or solution—such as SARS—shakes the foundation of our belief system.

The current debate about 11 is another example of events that attack our rationally based sense of order. An emotional war, in which 19 individuals can challenge the most dominant conviction in history, that in the face of irrational beliefs. When in doubt, often, the response is to retreat to the irrational.

This growing tendency of the Western world to be afraid of the wrong things has been well documented by University of

Southern California sociologist Barry Glassner. In *The Culture of Fear*, he writes that at the same time as the reported Los Angeles Times was running the headline, "Road rage has become an exploding phenomenon across the country," the American Automobile Association was reporting that fewer than one out of 1,000 traffic-related deaths could be attributed directly to this cause. Proportionately, before getting on its report! The fact shows that the entire history of traffic-related road accidents has only slightly more than one-quarter of the number of people who die each year on North American highways.

Yes, SARS is scary. Prudence and reason suggest we should learn as much as we can about the virus, avoid high-risk encounters and stand to any possible asymmetry. But perhaps in recognizing that we live in an era of fear we can sleep peacefully, knowing the chances are very good that there is no bogeyman under the bed.

Alan H. Gregg is chairman of the polling and consulting firm The Strategic Counsel.



# 'PEOPLE REALLY WANT TO LAUGH'

War or not, this top Canadian comic says audiences want the joking to go on

**NOTHING IS SACRED** in the irreverent cast of CBC's satirical *The Hour Hat 22 Minutes*. They regularly spoof everyone from Jean Chrétien to the Pope. But this season the series really hit a nerve with its "Apology to America." In the sketch, cast member Colin Mochre—in his role as reporter Anthony St. George—travels to Washington and offers the collective regrets of Canadians for calling George Bush a miscreant, beating the Americans in Olympic hockey and for bombing down the White House during the War of 1812. The piece costilla buzz on the Internet. But in an interview with *Seventy-Seven* Sharon Doyle Driedger, Mochre, who also stars on ABC's improv *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*, points out that comedy can be tricky during crises.



These are troubled times, and yet you still know how to make people laugh.

In some ways it's easier, because people really want to laugh. The last two years have been just watching for bad news. Pretty much since Sept. 11, *The Hour Hat*'s been focusing on terrorism and war. After a while it gets tiring, and it's very depressing because the writers, the cast, everyone watches the news 24 hours a day. But I think comedians have probably been amusing war since the days of the first joke. The beauty of it is, there's always a lot of material so there it's just finding the right way to go about it, because you don't want to disrespect the people who are over there fighting the war or people who have lost people. It's hard finding the right balance, so there are days when we are just so happy when Jean Chrétien says something silly.

Are there any aspects of Sept. 11 and the Iraq war that are off limits?

We're not making fun of the soldiers or the reasons why we go to war. Pretty much, we've always been allowed to do whatever we want on the show. But our producers keep an eye on the state of a piece. Of

course, they have read the stick lawyers working on it too.

Are people really offended?

When I did "Public Apology to America" some Americans were deeply offended. To me, the piece wasn't any more scathing than anything on *Saturday Night Live* or *The Daily Show*. But Americans have a problem with other cultures making fun of them. I guess it's the same thing, you know, sometimes you can say something bad about your wife, but if somebody else says something bad about your wife, you get really angry.

Did Canadians like your apology to the Americans?

Yeah, most did. We're a fairly self-deprecating country to begin with. There were some when I watch *22 Minutes* and go, "My God!" Like when Mary Walsh goes up to the Prince

Minister and puts her arms around him. If there was America, she'd be down on the ground with a gun after him. I guess we're a little more relaxed here and we're able to laugh a little easier at ourselves.

On the other hand, Chrétien actually tried to choke somebody.

At least he didn't have Secret Service guys do it. There's something charming about that. You know, he choked his own spokesman. I mean, George Bush choked a general, but we have a prime minister who fights back. And his wife strangled someone with a sculpture. The whole family's dangerous. Don't cross us.

Do you think Americans are just more sensitive now because of the war?

They're definitely more sensitive since Sept. 11. God knows, it's certainly understandable

They probably feel more vulnerable than they have ever felt. Now they're actually worrying about why other people "don't like us." I don't think that was something they ever thought about before.

So are jokes on Canada-U.S. relations too timely for them right now?

Actually, lately I've been doing a lot of shows in the U.S. where a couple of us from *Whose Line* have been doing improv. The entire show is based on the audience's suggestions and we have to get anything that has anything to do with the war, the government or Canadian-American relations. People come to those shows to get away from it all.

What allows us to start laughing again after the horror of war?

They say comedy is tragedy plus time. I think you can almost make fun of anything—it becomes sort of a survival tactic. I've known people who have faced terminal diseases and after a certain amount of time they start to lightly and make jokes that

you could never ever make. You have to find some humour in it just to survive.

So humour is cathartic?

It is. I love doing my job, but you think, "Well, I'm just being goofy and making a living at it." Then people come up and say how much the shows mean to them. After Sept. 11, a New York-based insurance therapist was telling her patients to watch *Whose Line*. So humour does have a place. When you go through bad times a good laugh can ease an awful lot. I'm no doctor, but it's amazing how healthy you feel after a good laugh.

Do you consider yourself a comedian or a satirist?

I am myself more in comedies. I don't think I could ever be accused of being a great political satirist. Most of my stuff is based on everyday life. With satire, in a way you're trying to change the world, although you never really can. But I can at least, perhaps, show the world the sleep that we go through sometimes.

Who is your favourite target? Saddam? Bush? Clinton?

Clinton's a great target. What I love is you can just play a clip of him saying something and you usually get a laugh. There have been some things I've watched, and I thought, "My God, it makes me so mad." Bush doesn't always inspire me to write because he seems nice—and Saddam, the same thing.

How does Bush scare you?

He does scare me to know exactly what to say when he's talking, about how we have to root out America's enemies. There are the times it seems he's on top of things. I guess that's what scares me.

And Saddam?

You know, you just don't want to put him off—or his doubts. To me, the thing I always get inspired about with the news is never really knowing what's going on. Is he alive? Is he dead? I want everything to be known. There are times we still don't really know who killed Kennedy. It bothers me that you may die without ever finding out all the answers. □



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**THE SUNDAY MORNING** congregation in the pews barely outnumber the handful sleepshovers who the New Testament says came here to worship on a winter's night 2,000 years ago. Two young families and some elderly men and women stand, spaced roughly one with that have been blackened by the smoke of centuries, watching richly vested Armenian Orthodox priests prepare the sacrament. Their songs of praise and the droning chiasm of incense burners echo hollowly in the former stable. When the service is done, there are no pilgrims waiting, as they used to, to kneel in the worn grooves on the marble floor and touch the silver star that marks where the baby Jesus lay in his manger.

The famous for the Roman Catholics even in the modern church near door to the ancient Basilica of the Nativity is backbar, but the church is still less than half full. As soon as the priest motions to the pulpit, the teenagers boys halt for the girls. Smiling and socializing in the courtyard while their parents, grandparents and sisters finish their devotions, they talk about the future. A life away from the curfew, poverty and violence of Bethlehem and the rest of the occupied territories. A Holy Land with fewer and fewer willing custodians. "If I got the chance, I would leave the next morning," says Shadi Qatana, a heavily pigged 17-year-old in a tight white T-shirt. "Everyday it's the same routine here. There's nothing to do, only violence and killing. There's no future here." His friend, Mashaal Kanaib, holds a cigarette behind his palm and holds his breath until a smoking Palestinian fires another one. "It's like to go and join my uncle in Chile," he says. "My parents have already told me to go if I get the opportunity. They don't want me to end up like them."

It's been more than 50 years since Christians were the majority in what was then known as the city of King David. The 1948 war between newly established Israel and

surrounding Arab nations, as well as subsequent battles, brought thousands of Muslims to the rocky hillside, just a 15-minute drive from the gates of Jerusalem. But now, 23 years into the latest Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation, a new migration is happening, from Bethlehem and other Christian communities in the West Bank, Gaza and Israel. An exodus of people tired of being eternally caught in the conflict between the Jewish state and old Palestinians. A rapidly expanding fight that threatens to transform some of the holiest sites in Christendom from vibrant communities to empty museums.

"My outlook for the future is that we will end up in 20 to 25 years with no more than 25,000 or 30,000 Christians, mostly older people," says Bernard Sebella, a sociologist with the Middle East Council of Churches in Jerusalem. "The youth will leave. If the head and heart are somewhere else, we can't be telling people to stay and hold on to the holy places." Sebella, who studies the Christian community in his work with the MECC and Bethlehem University, estimates that more than 2,000 Christians have left the territory since the start of the second intifada, and points to similarly shrinking numbers in Israeli cities like Haifa, Nazareth and even Jerusalem. Official government statistics, released last December, peg the population of Christians living in Israel at 142,000, or 2.1 per cent of the country. The Palestinian Authority says 1.7 per cent, or 50,000, of its three million citizens are of Christian background, but Sebella says that in both communities the actual numbers are significantly smaller, and still dropping. Lower birth rates are part of the problem—an average Muslim family these days is two times as many children as Christian Arabs—but the occupation and its fallout are what is really driving the diaspora. "Those who have options are leaving," says Sebella. "And if the situation continues to be so bleak and my three children had the chance to go

# EASTER IN THE HOLY LAND

Violence and economic dislocation are fuelling an increasing exodus of Christians from the places where their faith was born 2,000 years ago

shroud, I certainly wouldn't hold them back."

Bethlehem, with a population of 28,000, a little less than half of them Christmas, is a microcosm of the problems facing the wider community. Unemployment, which was running at eight per cent before the peace process broke down in the fall of 2000, now tops 40 per cent. Tourism, once the backbone of the local economy, has completely dried up—there's no room at the inn, and in the restaurants. Most of the shops can't even be bothered to open, their metal shutters and commercial signage long since plastered over with spray-painted slogans of Palestinian resistance. Christmas are not prominent in the enclaves, but their sympathies are with it, and they too can be found among the images and photos of "martyrs"—both active and passive—in the mine.

There's a street on the power paying tribute to the most recent addition to the list: Christine Salada, a 22-year-old, died in a burst of gunfire March 25 on her way to school. She, her parents and her older sister had the misfortune to find themselves driving behind a vehicle that Israel authorities say was carrying gun-wielding Hamas guerrillas very possible for a Jerusalem but bombing that killed 12 and wounded 45 in November 2002.

Sitting on a living room sofa beneath framed coats and a large portrait of Christ, Christine's parents, George and Nagma, review the omnipresence of crosses and recount the horror of that morning. "No one told us nothing," says George, the principal of school Gweri Orthodox high school. "They just started shooting from all directions. All the windows in the car shattered and I felt the bullets hitting my left side."

It took a moment at a Jerusalem hospital more than five hours to remove the nine automatic rifle darts from his body. Christine, who was hit in the head, died before the ambulance made it past the checkpoint on the road out of town. "She liked studying, the kind of person, she wanted to be a nurse," says George, his voice thick with emotion. "She was a very quiet little girl who just liked to help other people." According to data collected by a Palestinian human rights group, Christine was the 46th child killed by Israel forces in the course of this conflict.

In his office overlooking Manger Square, Mayor Hanan Nassar says that such deaths and the loss of civilian prisoners of occupation threaten to sink his city. "It's unacceptable

had these," he says. Where 1.5 million tourists used to come every year—15,000 to 20,000 pilgrims on Christmas Eve alone—now only a handful are willing to brave the roadblocks, snare wires and armed soldiers. Israeli Defense Force incursions into the city, like the 39-day standoff between the army and Palestinian militants who held up to the Israeli army, have caused more than US\$5 million in damage to the local infrastructure, says the mayor. "We can't collect taxes because people aren't working. They don't have the money to pay their municipal electricity charges or their water bills. We're stranded. We're stuck in this mud." Government plans for the army to build a defensive barrier of concrete walls, ditches and electrified fences to cut the occupied territories off from Israel can only make matters worse, Nassar says.

On the Jerusalem-Bethlehem road, now known as Yasser Arafat Street, the construction of what locals call "the wall" has barely begun, but the effects are already being felt. The doors of the steel and fire-walled Paradise Hotel, Jaffa-City, Menorah Souvenirs, and dozens of other businesses, are pulled tight. The once-bustling commercial strip used to boast 87 businesses. Today, only eight remain. Standing behind the counter of his store-front, Ayman Awwad surveys the street lanes as he listens to his wife's words regarding their plans to build a barrier floor to eight meters high down the middle of the street. His own store is the future, a couple of hundred meters away, in the giant concrete dome and guard towers that surround Rachel's Tomb, a Jewish holy site. Awwad's biggest concern is that, as with 40 other mostly Christian families in the neighborhood, his house and his business will be on opposite sides of the wall. "Once the barrier goes up it will never come down," he says. "We'll be guests in our own home. Anybody who wants to come and visit us will have to seek special permission from the military." Awwad and his brother, who owns the pharmacy next door, are planning anyway to move where happens, but he can't say the same for his friends and fellow Christians. "It's not to the end, but I understand why others might leave. This will not destroy Bethlehem."

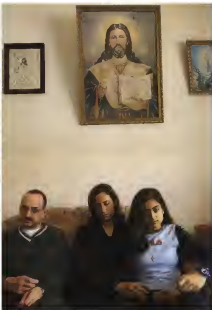
**AT THIS TIME OF YEAR**, the streets of Old Jerusalem should be teeming with the faithful. Devout pilgrims tracing the final steps



of Jesus along the via dolorosa. The religious tourism. Tourism. The conflict, Sept. 11 and the war in Iraq have changed all that. There are no lines of people waiting to ascend the steeply walled staircase to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre that leads to the heights of Golgotha—where the Crucifixion took place. No praying crowds are gathered before Christ's tomb. Only a few bored

guards haunt the recesses of the sanctuary, waiting hopefully for the second coming of the foreign visitors.

In an ornate side chapel, Abu Ismael crosses himself as he stands before the gold-furnished altar. When he leaves in five months to join his son and daughter-in-law in the West Bank city of Ramallah, his home church in the West Bank city of Ramallah will have to find



The Saladas (above), with 25-year-old Marian, plan to stay in the Holy Land; too the Anglican Bishop John Abu Di-Nassar and his son Hanna, cross on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; it is empty of visitors

new candle lighters. There will be few candidates for the position. "When the conflict started, most of the Christians who live in Ramallah asked their families in the States and other places to help them get out," Ismael says. Less than a fifth of the community remains, he adds.

It's the land of many that angers Archbishop Anastasios, secretary of the Greek

Catholic patriarchate in Jerusalem. "We shouldn't leave so easily—we should be following the example of the Israelis," he says. "We should love and cherish the Holy Land as the Jews love and cherish the Holy Land. We have to stay, to insist to be here." It's a message he and representatives of the other Christian denominations have repeatedly stressed from the pulpit, but so





The Nazzari will soon move to Chile with southern Mark; worshippers take communion at St. Catherine's Roman Catholic church in Bethlehem

little avoid. When asked if he's worried, the Archbishop sighs and seeks solace in the past. "We've been through this many times before," he says. "Christ himself, immediately after his birth, had to flee to Egypt to avoid persecution. It seems like there are always Herods and Pilates in history."

What many Christians in the Holy Land feel most acutely, however, is a sense of abandonment by their brethren in other nations. The Palestinians in the territories receive support, charitable aid and cash from Muslims around the world. The Jews can count on the backing of their diaspora and the substantial financial and military aid of the United States. But little help has come from the Christian churches and their millions of adherents. "Anyone who depends on the income from the pilgrims is suffering," says Father Johnathan Mawar, a largely Brazilian priest, who previously was known by a different name: growing up in Austin, Tex. "And when the local community starts to leave, it puts an enormous strain on the institutions they leave behind, especially schools."

In a good year, 1,800 groups, with some between 30 to 50 pilgrims each, would come to the Holy Land from Italy alone. The millions of lire, francs, and dollars now often spent on shops, restaurants and religious souvenir shops, much of it going directly

**'Christ himself, after his birth, had to flee to Egypt to avoid persecution. There are always Herods and Pilates in history.'**

into the pockets of local Christians, has not been replaced. The Catholic Church and its donors have grounded some funding on building new low-income housing developments in several Israeli and Christian communities, but when such efforts have done little to stem the tide of out-migration. "I think people can hang on in Jerusalem, but I can't say it for Bethlehem and other places in the West Bank," says Mawar, who works on the church's consumer that oversees the "thousand-candy" holy sites.

To the north, 120 km away in Nazareth, Jesus's boyhood home, the merchants in the marketplace outside the local basilica are finding few visitors for the Lord Virgin Mary, peering night and suffering Christ that face the shelves of their crowded shops. Many are ready to throw in the towel. "I'm going to America just as soon as I get the papers," says Kather Kumpah, an Armenian woman with a new tattoo and a thick coat of sparkly gold eyeshadow. "In the future,

the only people here will be the Jews and the Arabs fighting each other." Samia Abu Nasser, the owner of the Bible Land Travel Agency across the street, will stay, but only because her extended family owns too many local businesses to think about picking up stakes and starting over again. "We open some meat and eat in the office from 9:30 to the morning until 6 in the afternoon without serving a single person," she says.

Deep in the damage to the local economy and the malaise that comes from living in the middle of a seemingly endless conflict, the Christian community in Nazareth—a part of Israel proper—is in far better shape than its counterpart in the occupied territories. High above the green hillside overlooking town, the Anglican Church has recently built a sprawling new elementary and high school that would be the envy of many Canadian cities. "Many people from our community sought refuge in the West, but after years of being in the States or elsewhere, they're being coming back in recent years," says Hanna Abu El-Azid, the headmistress. And there is promise for the future. El-Azid has 1,840 students enrolled this year—48 per cent of them Christian, about the same percentage as the town—and 1,200 registered for next year.

On this day, the school has a special visitor, its namesake and the headmistress's dad,

the Right Rev. Rish Abu El-Azid, Anglican bishop of Jerusalem. Replaced in a gentle robe, he chats happily with students in the hallways, but gets charged with the big picture—his diocese is responsible for Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Israel and Palestinian territories—he is a cosmopolitan Christian. "The whole Christian community throughout the Middle East is in difficulty," he says. "This war in Iraq has left great grudges and animosity burned in the hearts of people here. It has contributed to the misunderstanding that Christianity and the West and out of the East. And it will have greater harm to the Christians than anything else."

**BSHARA NAZZARI** walks through the rooms of his family's cramped apartment in Bethlehem, his hands clasped, showing off the holy sites in the walls, windows and furniture. A year ago, weapons took up positions in a building up the street and started taking positions at homes in Qilo, a Jerusalem suburb a few hundred metres away across the olive groves. Little responded with machine guns and tank shells. Nazzari's father was wounded in the fighting. He has already left for Chile. Bshara, his wife, Nahal, and their newborn son, Mark, will follow in a matter of weeks. "We're looking for better times," says Bshara. "It's going to be a better future for the whole village," Nahal adds. They are trying to make sure that Mark's name is never spray painted on a enemy's wall.

**BRIEF IS A GREAT EQUALIZER.** The loss felt by families who have fallen victims to the region's pernicious violence is the same regardless of how they worship God. There is an empathy, a noble dignity and grace with which they suffer the griefing and questions of the media, the soldiers' confidence of strangers. Like many others, Christine Nazzari's family are staying their termant with the world in hopes that it will do some good. While they talk, George and Nazzari constantly reach out to reach and hug their remaining child, 15-year-old Murtan. They speak of Christmas for goodness, and say they are praying that their souls, physical and spiritual, will be healed. "We have no hint for a moment. As Christians, we want peace and love and security," says Nazzari. Unlike many of their friends and neighbours, they will stay in Bethlehem. "It's hard to think about leaving," says George. "This is my country, this is my city. What would I go to?" Their faith was born part of the road two millennia ago. And Christians in the Holy Land have never been able to forget that their beloved knew suffering too. "To me it's very simple," says George. "Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, and so was our Christ. They both died miserably. But the message is the same. It's a message of peace for the whole world."

gnathos@maclean.ca

## Tell us about the local heroes in your community

The July 1 issue of *Maclean's* will feature our 17th annual Honour Roll. This year we feature profiles of 18 Canadians who have made an important difference to our country. Previous honourees include such distinguished Canadians as Robertson Davies, Roberto Benigni, Robert LePage and Diana Krall.

We invite you, our readers, to submit nominations for the 2003 Honour Roll, including testimonials of 50 words or less. To be eligible, candidates must be Canadian citizens who made a significant contribution to the life of the nation in the past 12 months.

Maclean's seeks people from a wide variety of fields, from the well known to the quiet heroes. There is only one exception—those who are involved professionally in politics.



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**MACLEAN'S** Canada, in depth



# RESURRECTING JAMES

A new book and film shed light on Jesus's almost forgotten brother, leader of the earliest Christians

**EVEN ITS ADVOCATES** never thought it would be easy. From the day last October when owner Oded Guttan and Biblical Archaeology Review editor Eilat Shukla announced the discovery of a 2,000-year-old Jerusalem box that may have borne the bones of Jesus Christ's brother, the James ossuary has been a very large bone of contention. Within days, one scholar declared that an observer would have to be "blind as a bat" not to recognize the box's inscription—"James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus"—as an obvious forgery. The following month, another academic described the room-sized swirling about the ossuary as "too vicious to depict in print." By the first standards of biblical archaeology, though, such criticism passes as mild-mannered. And since the initial flurry of controversy, most experts have been holding fire, waiting for test results and a detailed scientific appraisal.

That hasn't stopped U.S. lawyer Shukla and his collaborator, Ben Witherington, a professor of New Testament studies at Lee University, from publishing a layman's book on the ossuary, *The Brother of Jesus* (HarperCollins), or lining up visiting Cardinal-designate cardinal Sancha Jacobson from Rome, James, brother of Jesus (Discovery, April 30), which will be in 70 countries on Easter Sunday. The film and book obviously played—Shukla and Guttan gave Jacobson exclusive access to the ossuary—and both are absorbing accounts that make a plausible (if, inevitably, controversial) case for identification.

And both, almost in passing, focus attention on an issue that, in religious and historical circles, is more significant than the box itself: These reports that transport the ossuary to the first "tangible" proof of Christ's existence are true only in a literal sense. There is no doubt that Jesus of Nazareth lived (No New Testament writer that there was no evidence of Christ's existence "apart from texts," it was ignoring the fact that the same holds true for thousands of historical figures.) No whether it's real or a fraud, the ossuary's true significance is the-



The ossuary's story, like every dispute in biblical archaeology, is fraught with conflict.

ly to lie in its resurrection. James, for centuries the brother of the Lord, as St. Paul called him, has been virtually erased from the consciousness of Western Christianity. But in the decades following the Crucifixion, James was the most important Jesus adherent alive—and a bridge between nascent Christianity and Jewish roots.

As for the box itself, an story-like seemingly every dispute in biblical archaeology—is riddled with legal and financial implications, controversial local sectarian positions and personal interests. The Jewish practice of burying deceased relatives a year after death in ossuaries—small stone containers far larger enough to hold a finger, the longest human bone—reached its peak in the ossuary before the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE.

The first complicating factor in evaluating the James ossuary, a trapezoid-shaped box 10 cm wide at one side and 25 at the other, is that it was not unearthed by archaeologists but looted from a gravesite sometime in the past 70 years of archaeological "tourism"—information gleaned from where and how an object is found—means many scholars consider it historically useless. Among scholars who were willing to entertain the ossuary, the actual age of the box has raised little dispute, if only because no clear consensus is available on the antiquities market for a few hundred dollars. Most

doubters assume that buying one would be a reasonable investment for a high-stakes forger. And even on the ossuary's provenance, the electrical film that forms over time, indicate the box is old enough to be genuine.

The Aramaic inscription is another matter entirely. There is a noticeable cutting off in engraving skill from start to finish. The key wording—"brother of Jesus"—in the most sloppily written. That's enough for some observers to see two hands at work, one of whom italicized that phrase, and declare it a forgery. But it would take, in Shukla's reasonably points out, an exceptionally stupid forger to add to an existing inscription, rather than starting from scratch on a blank ossuary. Many others, like André Lemaire, the noted French scholar who deciphered the inscription, see a single hand at work. In any event, Israeli academics have found the provenance within the inscribed letters too, which would not be the case in a modern fake.

Next up is the content of the inscription—in the James, the Joseph, the Jesus? The three Aramaic names—Yakob (Jacob or James), Yosef (Joseph) and Yehoshua (Joshua or Jesus)—are the Yim, Dik and Hary of their era. Fully a quarter of known Jewish names in the time of Christ bore one of them. But statistical analysis of the possible frequency of the ossuary's combination—first Joseph, then James and Jesus—may improve the odds of the being Christ's family. For Jacobowitz, "the silence has spoken," and the case is proved.

Quite a few may beg to differ, citing the two-hand theory, or the fact that patterns can be faked or that the statistical analysis of names does not amount to a simple. Or simply that it's too good to be true. The overall problem is that proponents are trying to prove a negative—that the box was not fiddled—and measure from three points: that the ossuary therefore belonged to St. James. But assertions are unprovable, an irony seemingly lost on Shukla, who uses the same argument—doubters can't prove Old Testament stories aren't true—in defense of the Bible's historical accuracy.

At the end of his documentary, Jacobowitz shows an image meant to be the final link in his chain of evidence. In Jerusalem's Aelia Cathedral of St. James, there is a monumental 17th-century painting of the saint with another personage framed within his body's mother. The apostle's sister, James's soul, according to heaven from a



supposed-shaped box, but where the film maker sees the ossuary, others see more. Many to imagine they are looking at an Aramaic fragment of evidence of apostasy. Faith, traditional Christian and Jewish theology teaches, precedes understanding, so does skepticism, and doubters and believers alike can find support for their positions in the same ambiguous evidence.

But who was this James, around whom the whole controversy rages? The New Testament mentions Christ's "brother" several times, notably in the Gospel of Matthew 13:55. Orthodox Christianity accepts the brothers—James, Jesus, Simon, Jude and unnamed sisters—as step-siblings, the children of Joseph's first marriage. For most Protestants they are half siblings, the children of Mary and Joseph born after Jesus. The son of Mary and God. But for the Roman Catholic Church, and of the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity, the brothers are cousins. Every time they appear in the

Jacobowitz sees a final proof in the Aramaic cathedral's monumental portrait of James.

gospels, James's relatives are not among his followers. In Matthew, mention of their names prompts Christ to say, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house." But something extraordinary happened on James after Jesus's death—like St. Paul on the road to Damascus, James encountered the risen Christ.

Once he became a believer, James—Jesus's oldest male relative in a family-dominated society—took precedence over the 12 Apostles and became leader of the Jerusalem church. Paul brought his teachings to James for vetting, and even St. Peter bowed to James's authority when he questioned between Jewish and Gentile converts. He seems, in fact, to have been a Christian and a Jew, something that most adherents to both faiths would now dispute was possible. And James is less admired by some later Chris-

tians than he was by contemporary Jews. For 16th-century Protestants, fully aware committed to the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith, James's call for good works was hopelessly pagan. And for Roman Catholics, James's early pre-eminence was at odds with its own Peter-based claims to ultimate authority.

But James's influence could easily be put aside in later Christianity, because his Jerusalem church was caught up in the greatest schism ever faced on the religious traditions of Ancient Israel. When the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and its temple complex eight years after Jesus's death in 62 CE, all the followers of Yahweh were left rootless. Out of the debris, the adherents of Jesus created an increasingly Gentile Church, while Jews eventually coalesced under the umbrella of Rabbinic Judaism. James, the brother of the Lord, who moved so easily between the two camps in his life time, might now not recognize either. ■

# COMING TO A SCREEN NEAR YOU—J.C.

An illustrious cast and crew bring the story of Jesus to sumptuous life

**JERUSALEM** is sitting on the shores of Lake Ontario. The city's temples, the Gihon Spring and the Roman praetorium (common hall) are all there, within the walls of a Toronto warehouse. The city's inhabitants are there too. Apostles, peasants, money-changers and Romans stroll about, complete with robes, sandals and pre-modern hygiene. And they all seem to be waiting for someone. Then, from a nearby trailer with the initials J.C. printed on the door, emerges Jesus—that is, Jesus as played by British actor and Royal Shakespeare Company veteran Henry Ian Cusick.

It was the last week of March, and the cast and crew of *The Gospel of John*, a Canada-U.K. co-production, were in the final days of shooting. They'd been working for four months in Spain and Toronto to recreate the book of John in painstaking detail—floors were decorated with mosaics appropriate to the period of the New Testament, and the costumes used only fabrics of the era. During filming, a panel of expert academic advisors were on hand to ensure authenticity and deal with big and small questions such as: was Jesus's last supper a Passover meal? what was Lazarus's social status? did people clap to show appreciation back then? what kind of door locks and keys did they use? "If they made a Chinese theme park, this is what it would look like," says Daniel Kask, the Toronto actor playing Peter. "We were in the boat when Jesus walks on water, and it was a stormy night, and they were pouring water on our heads. We said, 'If this was a theme park, this would be the ride.'"

Most of our film about the life of Jesus, like Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ* or Mel Gibson's sprawling *The Passion*—a re-creation of Jesus's final hours—anticipate the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. But *The Gospel of John* is only adheres to just one account: Peter Richardson, a retired University of Toronto professor of theology and chair of the movie's advisory committee, says that relying up material from different gospels is the usual ap-



Cusick, opposite Cristóbal Leal's Caiaphas, created a strong dynamic with the apostles

proach because it gives filmmakers more leeway with the story. "So, we don't insert ourselves into the film quite as much as I suspect Mel Gibson will."

*The Gospel of John* is funded by Visual Bible, a Toronto media company that plans to film every book of the Old and New Testaments. Each film will have a limited theatrical release and then be widely distributed on DVD and marketed as an educational resource for Christians. It certainly doesn't seem the kind of project that would attract top talent. But the sumptuous production values—it'll look more like *Gladiator* than BBC Shakespeare—as well as the big plans of creative consultant (and former theatre antagonist) Garth Dornik, who's called of opening *Jahs* in IMAX theatres, have drawn a competitive cast and crew. Most of the principal actors come from the Royal Shakespeare Company or the Stratford Festival. Director Philip Saville (Midwinter) is a British film, stage and TV veteran who helmed a BBC production of *Hamlet*

with Christopher Plummer 39 years ago. Still, it's not nothing that of a miracle to make this crowd-for-word adaptation into an entertaining drama. And a lot of the pressure falls on the enigmatic Cusick, 34, as Jesus. "Harry is quite remarkable," says director Saville. "He somehow embodies the gravitas, simplicity and charm of Jesus, as well as the ability to make human contact without coming over as a naive, sensitive communist. And women will like him."

Kask, 43, praises Cusick for creating a strong dynamic with the men playing the apostles. The Canadian actor was so moved by the experience that he told the producers he'd say for playing Peter in the other gospels. Or better yet, he says, if they're going to film all the books, he'd like to be Noah or Moses. "I learned so much about the Bible," he notes. "Protein to this, my whole real knowledge of Christianity was Jesus Christ Superstar. Trust me, that goes a long way." That a host ride with Jesus on a Toronto set goes quite a bit further. □

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## A THREE-PENNY OPERA

Children rallied against a 1947 candy price hike

IT WAS 1947, the soldiers had returned home and the country was booming. Kids across the country hung out at the soda fountains, and in Ladysmith, B.C., 96 km northwest of Victoria, they gathered in the Wigwag Café. It was just such an innocent gathering, one late-April day that set off a chain of events, sparking a 15-day national boycott campaign that saw 300 kids across the Victoria legislature while thousands of others staged protests across the country—aiming up from that Communists were corrupting the nation's youth.

In those days it rained, recalls Parker Williams, a retired marine engineer who grew up just outside Ladysmith, "was a big, big purchasing power." It would begin to rain on a bottle of pop. It would also buy, until that spring morning, a chocolate bar. O'Harey Nelson, Sweet Marie were among the favorites. Then, one noon hour, the candy connoisseurs came in for a shock. "They raised the price from five cents to eight," says Williams. "It really blew away." That evening, Williams, then 17, and 40 of his friends marched up and down the main street, holding homemade placards denouncing candy makers and the sellers

who had passed along the 66-per-cent price hike—part of widespread inflationary increases following the end of wartime wage and price controls. Williams led the parade in a black 1923 McLaughlin Buick, "all chalked up," he recalls, with slogans like "Don't be a sucker." They picketed the store the next three noon hours, making headlines in the Ladysmith Chronicle. But the Wigwag continued to sell chocolate bars for eight cents and the protest, says Williams, "just faded away."

Not quite. Children across the country got wind of the boycott and—often at the urging of the National Federation of Labour Youth, a Communist Party front organization of about 3,000—took similar action. In Bathurst, N.S., 12-year-old Cora LeBlanc gathered a dozen friends on their front porch. "We made posters out of cardboard boxes and nailed them onto the benches," says the retired office worker who still lives in her hometown. Armed with the placards, they then "started at the corner store, and walked up the street, past W.J. Kent general store, to Vesit Pharmacy," owned by LeBlanc's dad. Last year, six of that group retraced their march, complete with placards

in Morrisburg, Ont., and across Canada, kids said eight cents was going "too darn far."

and a performance of their homogenous protest single, *We want five-cent chocolate bar, eight cents is going too darn far*. Their re-enactments is featured in *The Pine Cone War*, a documentary ( airing April 26 on History Television) about the cross-Canada 15-day candy bar boycott.

LeBlanc can't remember what prompted her to take to the streets. But according to the *Toronto Telegram*, she and thousands like her were duped by the Communists. "Chocolate bars and a world revolution may seem poles apart," wrote the paper, "but to the devoted Communist mind there is a close relationship."

One of those "devious minds" belonged to retired York University political scientist Norman Penner, then NRX's general secretary and a CPC member until 1957. Electing to be asked to organize a protest in Toronto. "I got into Harbord Collegiate," he says, where the school had assembled to hear him speak. Even a senior Cadbury executive was there. But the students failed to know the candy baron. He told Penner simply, "We're not going back to five cents."

The media grossly exaggerated the Communist involvement, says Penner. As for the Bathurst group, recalls LeBlanc: "We didn't know anything about them. We were just a bunch of kids." Adds Williams: "Puffins was the last thing on our minds." What was on their minds was surely sweeter.

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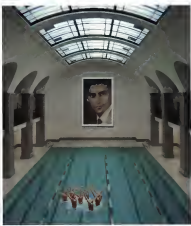
## A CREATIVE SPLASH

Canadians at the World Stage festival break down genre barriers

WHEN IT comes to theatrical innovation, there are a lot of queer things going on in Toronto these days. In a midtown swimming pool, thousands of spectators witness acts queerer than any act while a silent movie about Rudolf Nureyev overhead. In another location, actors dance and mime their way through a short story by Gogol, to the swelling music of Shostakovich. It also seems so very European—the sort of avant-garde theatricality normally associated with places like France or Russia, where there's a long tradition of breaking down boundaries between genres. But these shows are Canadian, and are being performed as part of *World Stage Festival's* biennial *Do Manner World Stage Festival*. The month-long event (April 1-27) has always presented cutting-edge drama from abroad. But this time around, it also offers a chance to see just how inventive Canadian staging has become.

In the past, Canadian appearances at World Stage have often been, if not embarrassing, then stuck in an old-fashioned, lower orbit. There were occupations, of course, most notably from the celebrated Quebec director Robert LePage and Gilles Malherbe. But gradually, rising English-Canadian theatre has been shedding their reserve and taking up the increasingly radical style, with a emphasis on visual wit and genre bending. This movement has been strongest in opera and other dramatic musical worlds; in fact, four of the six Canadian offerings at World Stage are music-driven.

One early English success was *Facing South*, from Toronto's New Open Works. Powerfully staged in a derelict warehouse, it evokes the controversial 1909 seaside on the North Pole by U.S. admiral Robert E. Peary (Gregory Dahl). The actor sings more with a Japanese guitar reminiscent of classical Japanese theatre. And despite Linda Coffin Smith's excellent score, this is a riveting



*Agita in Love* and other works exemplify a new inventiveness in this country

production in which single objects such as crumpled plastic sheeting are skillfully used to suggest the Arctic wastes.

John Krizan's *Tamara*, on the other hand, goes for the more outrageous acting possible—a Toronto mission, where spectators get colorful individualized members through the house in the hopes of unearthing the amorous adventures of Italian poet and drag addict Gabriele d'Annunzio (John Gillett). The play, set in 1922, was considered revolutionary when it premiered in 1981—hence its inclusion in the festival. It still seems highly original yet the drama is underwritten by its melodramatic script.

The show raises a critical issue: *Tamara* and all the other Canadian offerings—apart from Malherbe's *Le 800000*, set in a 15-hour—are about people and events outside Canada. Depending on your point of view, this can be taken as open-minded interna-

tionism, or a lack of faith in Canadian content. *The Overcoat* (April 23-27), a national hit when it was first mounted by Morris Panych and Woody Gorbun in 1997, is set in an unnamed eastern European city. Another much anticipated show, *Agita in Love* (April 26-27), from Toronto's Lost Performance, is set in an unnamed town—as both are evoked by a University of Toronto swimming pool.

On the whole, the advent of such innovative staging can only be greeted with joy. But the question remains: are some Canadian creators simply following a fashionable international while ignoring their own history and culture? This is not to say their works should have an obviously Canadian content. Among the shows already performed at World Stage, *Facing South*, despite its American central character, seems embraced by a skeptical Canadian sensibility. Productions that do not show themselves at home may well have novelty and intellectual flash, but in the longer run they may prove as transitory as yesterday's news. □



## QUEER AS FOLK

Sad sisters, sixties minstrels and a psycho shrink bring it all back home

SO YOU'RE AT the multiplex, gazing over the menu. You've heard good things about this small Canadian movie called *Anger Management*, but it deals with anger, death, angst and alcoholism in a Cape Breton family. After going through the war and SARS and the cancellation of spring, you wonder if you're in the mood for it. At the other extreme, there's *Anger Management*, a big, lunking Hollywood fire-and-fury Jack Nicholson and Adam Sandler. You like Jack, but you're not sure about Sandler, who's prone to pee-poo exclamation words he's not making, bellows out horse fire like *Phat! Drink! Love! Finally there's* *A Mighty Heart*, a movie necessary about a woman of '60s folk songs from the folks who gave us SCTV and *That 70s Show*. If you're torn between Canadian authenticity and American hyperbole, this week up appears to be a heavenly compromise—a Canadian kind of American movie—and it looks hilarious.

But none of these films is quite what you would expect. *MARION BRIDGE* is a modest but finely observed character study. Despite the bleak subject matter, it's no *Boys in the Boat*, and there's a flickering sense of humour to take the chill off the drama. Directing with a quiet clarity, German-born Canadian Willem van Gemundt studies her feature debut with this Chelmsford tale of three sisters. Agnes (Melly Parker) comes home to be with her dying mother (Margaret McNellie), and men up against her powerful older sister, Theresa (Melissa Jenkins), whose husband has dumped her for a younger woman. The middle child is Louise (Daisy Ewha), a clerk who's attracted into watching TV and dogmatism about a girl with a pickup truck. Bouncing off the family intrigue, Agnes keeps driving off to check out a presumed 15-year-old (Kieran Pops), a girl as personable as her bad daughter.

As a slick alcoholic, Parker is superb—especially when her character falls off the wagon and into scorching code with a sister played by Ashley Mathews. And as the



Jonas (Pops), Parker and Smith play siblings reunited around their dying mother

long-suffering Theresa, Jenkins complements her beautifully. They actually look like sisters, and they create a fractious chemistry that is dead-on. But the scenes around

the ailing mother are overwrought. And while screenwriter David MacIsaac, adapting his own play, has a facility for natural dialogue larded with a subtle wit, the story feels invasive. It rumbles along in a series of small moments in a garish, emotional landscape that's authentic, yet also familiar—an East Coast hovel of repressed rage and unexpressed desire. For a tale of alcohol, incest, cancer and cocaine, *Marion Bridge* is remarkably sane.

**ANGER MANAGEMENT** is quite the opposite, a movie from the best, thrashing artificial heart of Hollywood. It doesn't have one plausible or authentic moment. But it does have some laughs, even if you hate yourself for going in to them. Sandler plays mild-mannered Dave Kuznick, who's brand ed as an air-mag columnist after a misunderstanding on a plane. A judge orders him to undergo anger-management therapy with a whacked-out shrink named Buddy (Jack Nicholson), who goes his patient into an extraordinary confrontation after another, then has an affair with the shrink's wife (Daisy Ewha). The shrinks' scene unfolds in a one-on-one play, with a predictable outcome. But there are



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some miserable guys—such as Dave's job, which involves dumping over us clothes for overweight cats. There's also a spoiled brawl in a Buddhist monastery, and a running gag joke to the tune of *I Got a Feeling*.

What's noteworthy about *Anger Man* argument is that it's Hollywood's first explicit post-9/11 farce. During the average midwest, the line "our nation is going through a difficult time" serves as repeated one-liner

And the climax takes place at a Yankees game, with former New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani leading a parade of cartoon "Jocks." In apparent, isn't dead, it's just got really fat. Then Jack starts to be performing one massive canoe—in a rift on his own road rage incident, he starts out to smash up a car with a golf club, then uses a baseball bat.

**A NIGHTY WIND** is a smart, shrewd comedy that may not lock up many laughs as

*Anger Management*, but it's far more satisfying. Directed by Christopher Guest, it was created with the improvisational technique he honed in previous mock documentaries. This is *Spinal Tap* (1984), *Waiting for Guffman* (1996) and *Best in Show* (2000). Once again, he wrote a satire by some story outline with on-star Eugene Levy, minus the dialogue, which the cast invented on camera.

The movie begins with the death of folk music impresario Irving Steenbloom. Irving's son, Jonathan (Bob Balaban), revives up his father's stable of folk-beer-tasters for a grand tribute concert in New York City's Town Hall. Among them are Mitch & Mickey (Levy and Catherine O'Hara), a sweetheart duo along the lines of Ian and Sylvia; a trio of puny crocodancers called the Pollorenos (Guest, Michael McKean and Harry Shearer) (and the New Mean Street Rogues, a Florida "recluse" led by a couple (John Michael Higgins and Jesse Lynick) who have crafted a religion based on the power of redou.

The heart of this comedy is in the music. As a satirical rendering of '60s folk, it's spot-on. Guest, McKean and Shearer—best-known as the power trio in *This is Spinal Tap*—are first-rate musicians. They understand that to parody music, you can't play it badly; you have to sound like the form. As *Spinal Tap*, they feigned heavy metal clichés that were often better than the real thing. Now, as the Pollorenos, they've created another real-life band—a raucy folk trio with catchy melodies, harmonized harmonies and polka-lyrics. Their songs range from *Shiloh* to *Quinto*, a Latin Miami dirge ("The silver strands of the moon's rays have me in a flood as the Gulf, the ballad of a train wreck in a coal mine ("Blood on the tracks/Wood in the mine/Whether and sisters what a terrible time").

As the divorced duo, Mitch & Mickey, SCTV veterans Levy and O'Hara form the backbone of the plot. The big question is whether Mitch will survive from a nervous breakdown, will be able to perform. Levoy goes far beyond his usual caricatures to create an exquisitely painful portrayal of a man-at-arms consumed with fear. And when he and O'Hara finally perform their lovechild duet, it's more heart-breaking than funny. That's the thing about good satire: When it's that good, you're not sure where to laugh. Only when you start to think, yes, maybe these guys are serious, do you begin to appreciate just how funny it is.



## NORTHERN EXPOSURE

A Yukon school's bison-hunting trip showed me how strong preteens can be

AS A SOUTHERNER, Canadian boy living in Red Deer, Alta., just crawling out of bed when I'd really rather just pull the covers over my head is about the hardest thing I do all day. But when you spend five days in the Yukon bush on a bison-hunting trip, and it's 33°C outside and the only source of heat is a wood stove burned down to embers, putting up with the fire is a biological imperative. Life, you discover, is all about warmth.

While Whitehorse residents rarely see the end of the earth (there is a Wild Man), it doesn't enter much into the southern consciousness. And beyond the city limits is a life most of us don't even imagine. That's why my cousin, elementary school teacher Peter Harris, took his family to the territory from Edmonton in 1987. He is one of Robert Service's Men That Don't Fit In, in one of the last places they do. Bull, his Grade 6/7 class at Hidden Valley School in Whitehorse is the almost any other group of Northwest-Canadian kids—with one major exception. For the past five years, Peter has been taking them on a bison hunt. Down south, most teachers don't take their classes on far-week-long field trips to hunt large land mammals. So when I heard Peter talking about the trip at a family get-together, I asked if I could tag along.

There are approximately 500 wood bison in southern Yukon, and the territorial Department of Environment watches the population closely, given the scarcity of bison. Each year, to offset natural population growth, the department grants a cull of 70 animals, distributing hunting permits by random draw. Local Indian bands co-operate with the Yukon government to look after the bison on their traditional lands and receive a number of tags as partial compensation. So Peter had had class members a letter to the Champagne and Athabasca First Nations' council weeks if they would give one of their tags to a group of kids. They did, and the bison hunt has since become a tradition.

The days leading up to the hunt were crisscrossed with activities. These ranged from

outdoor education classes to risk practices to helping Champagne and Athabasca land and resources officer Harry Smith lead in a net load of whitefish and lake trout from under a metre of ice on Athabasca Lake.

As I observed the 13 boys and six girls, one thing became clear: these kids are tougher than I am. They thought nothing of riding extremely rough terrain above the treeline on plastic toboggans toward behind snow machines, with the wind howling at 30 km/h. All for the chance of being among the ones who get to see the bison, as they could only go out six at a time.

We got lucky and found a herd of about 20 Smith and volunteer Daryl Kluge, an experienced guide and hunter, headed off on their snowmobiles to get close enough for a good shot (the kids don't usually shoot the bison). Minutes after the men and the bison disappeared behind the next peak, we heard a shot. Moments later, some bison came running around the peak from the opposite direction, and the kids excitedly looked for signs of one killing. They didn't need to. Dennis had taken a three-year-

old cow with his first shot. There was a big hit in the hind, but one of the loudest of bison camp is that hunting shouldn't be about trophies, but responsible stewardship and putting meat on the table. The loss of a young cow from the herd is an important for population control.

I was surprised to learn they processed the animal out there in the better cold. Watching these kids help skin, gut and quarter a large wild animal, warming their hands in the bloody carcass, made me wonder about the lives of my own fair preteens. There was so much more going on here. And at the same time, so much less. If the war in Iraq had already started, we wouldn't have known. We had week-old newspapers—for lighting fires.

Still, the larger world won't be held back. Southern-style, big-city liability concerns and safety-conscious school councils are making the trip harder to organize, going Peter more hoops to jump through every year. The deaths of seven Calgary high school students on an outdoor-education ski trip in February are not likely to make it any easier. It's almost enough to make Peter quit taking his kids out on the hunt. "Every body wants the foam-covered world," he laments. "Chances are, even with every safety precaution looked at, there will be burns and cuts and scrapes and pollen and tick kids, but you did with it as it comes. Every kid that walks out of here, their shoulders are back a bit, their chest sticks out a little further, and they're proud!"

For many teachers, the balance between the headaches and the rewards is a fine line. For Peter, the opportunity to share his love of the outdoors with his class is one way to make it work. His students range from the son of a surgeon to those who never got out into the wild, but I wouldn't find one with a bad word to say about bison camp. And the opportunity is spreading. Peter recalls how a Grade 2 student asked him whether he, too, would eventually go on a bison hunt. "I said, 'I don't know, are you whose hunter?' He shook his head, looked up at me with big eyes, and said, 'No—but I want to be I just got down and gave him a hug.'"

Down south, he might be regarded for inappropriate teaching. But in the Yukon most people still know how important warmth is.

Brady Sylvester lives and writes in Red Deer, Alta. To comment, write to brady@shaw.ca.

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## People | Going back to school can be an Olympian hurdle

Clara Hughes laughs sheepishly when she thinks of her first days as a university freshman last fall. "I had to slouch a ladder for my drawing class and I just couldn't do it," says the Olympian and five-time medalist at the University of Calgary. "I felt paralyzed and lost all confidence in myself." Being a 30-year-old surrounded by 19-year-olds can be pretty humbling sometimes.

Hughes isn't used to buckling under pressure. Her three Olympic bronze medals—two from the 1994 Atlanta Games and one in speed skating from Salt Lake City last year—are proof of that. In fact, the '98 Winter Olympic runner-up is one of only four athletes in

Olympic history to win medals at both the Winter and Summer Games. Now, in addition to homework assignments and hair-grooming efforts to learn French, Hughes is gearing up for what will likely be her Olympic season next year in Athens (after the fall semester in Calgary, she moved to Quebec's Eastern Townships to train).

In the meantime, while her art studies didn't get off to an explosive start, she's excited by her progress. "It's amusing to compare my work at the beginning of the year to now," says Hughes, who recently learned the basics of oil painting. "I did a series of portraits for my husband that I called my

After finishing her first art major, Hughes plans to give a little back to the community.

Only to Peter, it's funny but was so much fun. School has given me a perspective I've been lacking in life." Hughes is aware that becoming a world-famous athlete is a long shot, but she has no plans for life after sports. One idea came out of a recent 1,500-km biking adventure in northern Canada with her husband which she says opened her eyes to the plight of Native children. "I'd like to establish an art or sports camp for the kids," says Hughes. "I won't try and turn them into Olympic athletes, but it would be great to give back a little of what I had."

JOHN DUTTO

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER GREENBERG/DAVE

## Books | The Bible and the English language

"Why sell on your back?" was part W.H. Auden's response after encountering one of the Church of England's modern Bible translations. He was referring to the abandonment of what many consider the greatest work of prose ever written in English, and the best book ever authored by a saint—the King James Bible of 1611. Adam Nicolson's *David's Secretaries* (Knopf) does a wonderful job of describing the work, and the early 17th-century world, of the approximately four dozen scholar-translators involved. They formed a very learned church, indeed, from medieval Puritans to the highest of Anglicans. Some were prominent men, well respected, and little more than the names of many others, though one was destroyed by his contemporaries as "a disreputable diversion English cut-throat." But by whatever alchemy or God's grace, together they crafted a masterpiece of majestic and majestic prose that became the English-speaking world's basic textbook.



## BESTSELLERS

### Fiction

1. THE IMMORTAL, Jeffrey Deaver (D)	1
2. CROSSROADS OF DEATH, Robert Bly (D)	4
3. THE FIRST REFORMATION, Hilary Mantel (D)	3
4. THE NAVIGATOR OF NINE, Wayne Johnston (D)	6
5. THE NEW YORK TIMES, Richard D. (D)	2
6. THE HONEY MOON, Alice LaPlante (D)	2
7. THE KING OF KINGS, John Grisham (D)	3
8. THE NEW YORK TIMES, Richard D. (D)	2
9. THE NEW YORK TIMES, Richard D. (D)	2
10. THE NEW YORK TIMES, Richard D. (D)	2
11. THE NEW YORK TIMES, Richard D. (D)	2
12. THE NEW YORK TIMES, Richard D. (D)	2

### Non-fiction

1. THE NEW YORK TIMES, Richard D. (D)	2
2. THE NEW YORK TIMES, Richard D. (D)	2
3. THE NEW YORK TIMES, Richard D. (D)	2
4. THE NEW YORK TIMES, Richard D. (D)	2
5. THE NEW YORK TIMES, Richard D. (D)	2
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1) Based on the compilation by John Grisham

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## HOURGLASS MIRAGE

We saw live images of bombs in Iraq. But TV's notion of 'real time' is highly contrived

IT'S BEEN CALLED the first war that the world watched in "real time." But how real was it? We caught live images of bombs bursting on the other side of the world. Or, more often, stared at those images bathed in a lurid, toxic green glow. We watched our tip toward the scenes of Baghdad, and wondered who could be in there and where they might be going in the middle of a war. We watched birds scatter in the foreground of a friend. We watched our conversation with CNN's Aaron "Lalaly" Brown, who apologized for the tediously slow pace of a live feed. We turned on the TV at odd hours, as he continued by videophone to hear images of tanks rolling through the desert. And finally, we saw a ready-for-camera crowd of Iraqi citizens cheer as Saddam's statue was reduced to an Ozymandias ruin.

The live streaming images of real-time coverage became addictive. And so we tried to stay "on top" of the war, the longer we watched and the harder we looked, the farther away it seemed. The itch of watching war in real time began to lose its potency. Last week, as the battles still raged, a friend, who's against the war but hooked on its images, talked about it almost nostalgically. "Haven't the war been great?" she said in a moment of wicked candor. What the moment, of course, was not the military engagement, but her engagement with the media.

The "real time" of CNN's coverage was, in fact, highly contrived. As the network toggled between embedded correspondents and remote prompts, it acquired a play-by-play stream of events. But the flow was severely edited. With the music, the graphics, and the info bars of the subliminal screen, we weren't watching a war, we were watching a format—a format as a display role.

Real time is a term often used in film. It refers to a stretch of screen time that covers precisely the same time frame in the story. We've become accustomed to narratives that shuffle chronology like a deck of cards, with the story flashing back, forward, and inside out. But with our phones jaded

by a hyper-edited world, there's a growing appetite for dramas that appear to unfold as it happens. The most obvious example is Fox TV's 24, in which each two-hour episode, including commercials, corresponds to one hour of the story. Then there's the movie *Phone Booth*, an anticlockwise narrative of a man at a pay phone who finds himself in a sniper's crosshairs. But aside from using split-screen images—just like CNN—24 and *Phone Booth* tell only on the conventions of a picked-up Hollywood suspense thriller.

For a virtuoso form of real-time filmmaking, nothing matches *Ramona Arellano*, a 99-minute feature that consists of a single uncut shot, as the camera swoops through the Scots Heritage Museum in St. Petersburg, navigating a maze of characters from two continents. It's a challenge to watch, not unlike spending time in a real museum. You get sleepy, and suffer the edge of dreams. With art, unlike CNN, real-time made to create contemplation rather than titillation.

As an overstimulated film critic, I've developed a perverse love for pieces of real-time in movies, long uncut shots in which



nothing happens. Your mind is left free to wander. And what better place to wander than the desert. Gerry, a wonderful new film from director Gus Van Sant, tells a simple story of two young men (Matt Damon and Casey Affleck) who get lost in the desert while hiking. There's a 10-minute scene in which Affleck, stranded atop a boulder, tries to get up the nerve to jump. For much of the movie, the two actors just walk. There's a lovely touching shot of two heads bobbing as people as they trudge along for almost four minutes, with no sound but their footsteps falling in and out of sync.

Of course, there's nothing new about filming real time. Andy Warhol's movies made a fetish of it. But in the '60s that seemed like an avant-garde conceit. Now, in a multi-channel world of highly filtered stretch, watching pasty dry fields like the ultimate luxury. *Winning America* roll over the sands of Iraq, it's strangely liberating to see a pair of Americans blunder into the desert and get dangerously lost.

Gerry is so slow and spare—sorry, if you like—that it will be small wonder to find that CNN. In Canada, it may not even get distributed beyond Toronto. But for those who want to experience real time in the desert, there are other options. There's *Lawrence of Arabia*, with its famous long shot of a dot on the horizon slowly expanding into Omar Sharif on a camel. And there's *Witness to Doom*, an amazing film that I rediscovered on DVD the other night.

This 1964 Japanese classic is about an entomologist who hares into a large pit in the desert, where he's imprisoned in a house by a locally woman. She spends her nights shuffling sand, the way Canadians do the hell snow. Sand drifts, ripples and cascades through the film like water. After a while, you're not just watching an arid metaphor, or a subtle fable about the ultimate meaning; you're watching time itself, pouring through cracks in the roof, and flowing down wells, like liquid mortality. You're watching two people trapped in the quagmire of an hourglass that may be half full, or half empty. They're stranded in the desert of the human condition, trying to keep from being buried alive. And you realize that the desert is not just something to be conquered, or briefly ungranted by the thrill of a fast-moving track. In real time, the sand always wins. **B**

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